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THE CLASSICAL MORALISTS

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THE CLASSICAL MORALISTS

SELECTIONS
ILLUSTRATING ETHICS
FROM SOCRATES TO MARTINEAU

COMPILED BY
BENJAMIN RAND, PH. D.
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

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PREFACE

"The Classical Moralists" is a companion volume in the field of ethics, to the author's "Modern Classical Philosophers" in the domain of philosophy. The book is virtually a history of ethics, based not upon the ordinary description of systems, but upon selections from the original sources and upon translations of the authors themselves. It is sought, so far as is practicable, to present by means of the case method the most distinctive and constructive features in the ethical systems of the successive moralists. The evolution of ethical thought is thereby revealed, stripped of its controversial material, from Socrates to Martineau. Such a work, it is hoped, will prove indispensable as a text-book of required reading, alike for the historical and for the systematic study of ethics in the universities. The general reader, and more especially any one, whether among the clergy or the laity, desirous of acquiring knowledge of the different ethical systems, will find here a volume containing the original material of the great ethical masters, from the earliest to the most recent times.

Since Socrates may justly be regarded as the founder of ethics, this work begins with selections from Xenophon's "Memorabilia of Socrates," which centre about his doctrine of true knowledge as the source of right conduct and the application of the Socratic method to the identification of wisdom and virtue. The book then sets forth the lofty idealism of Plato. For this purpose is chosen his greatest work, "The Republic," since the virtues of the state and of the individual are regarded as identical. In Plato's subordination of the non-rational impulses to reason there is revealed the triple division of the soul, upon which he bases his four kinds of excellence, later styled the cardinal virtues: 1, wisdom; 2, courage; 3, temperance; and 4, justice. His beautiful allegory of the cave is also added, as used to teach the true dialectical process and the value of philosophy. The passages from

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the "Nicomachean Ethics" of Aristotle present the end of human action as the good, pleasure as the natural concomitant of virtuous activity, and virtue as a settled habit formed by a due observance of the mean in a course of conduct. The post-Aristotelian ethics of the Stoics and Epicureans is based upon the account contained in Diogenes Laertius' "Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers." The chosen representatives are Zeno, the follower of Antisthenes the Cynic, and Epicurus, the follower of Aristippus the Cyrenaic. The former reverts to the original Socratic identification of virtue and knowledge, and also seeks the highest good in a life conformable to nature; the latter places the root of pleasure in a freedom of the body from pain and the soul from disquietude, but likewise clearly points out that the supreme object of life can be attained only through an intellectual happiness that is identical with virtue. The transfer of Hellenic philosophy to Rome finds illustration from the Epicurean Lucretius, author of the didactic poem on "The Nature of Things," in the two passages where he treats of the "tranquillity of the philosopher," and of "the fear of death dispelled." It was in Stoicism, however, that the Roman mind reacted most fully on Greek speculation, and to it abundant expression is given by "Discourses" of Epictetus and "Meditations" of Marcus Aurelius. The first development of Neo-Platonism in systematic form is contained in the "Enneades" of Plotinus, from which extracts here show how in pure intellectual existence the soul escapes from the evils due to its bodily environment, and how it reaches its most exalted state, when in pure contemplation it apprehends the "One" or the "Good."

In the mediæval period it is difficult to present ethics apart from the great body of theological doctrines, except by means of a collection of isolated passages. Chapters from Augustine's "City of God," Peter Abelard's "Ethics, or Know Thyself," and Thomas Aquinas' "Summa Theologiae" have, however, been chosen, as it is believed that these works embody the most sustained and representative ethical speculation in mediæval thought.

The starting-point of modern ethics is to be found in the

discussion relative to the laws of nature taken from the epoch-making work of Hugo Grotius upon "The Rights of War and Peace." From Hobbes' "Leviathan" are taken those chapters wherein the rules of society which men ought to observe are established upon the dictates of right reason, proceeding necessarily from the nature of man. Cudworth, the most distinguished of the English Platonists, sets forth through his "Eternal and Immutable Morality" the essential and eternal distinctions of right and wrong. More, in his "Enchiridion Ethicum," lays down certain noemata into which he believes all moral doctrine may be resolved; and Cumberland, in his "Laws of Nature," becomes the precursor of modern utilitarianism by his one general proposition of benevolence or universal love. In the history of continental morals, from Spinoza's "Ethics" are given the doctrines of his one eternal substance, his three kinds of cognition, and his intellectual love of God. And from Malebranche's "Treatise of Morality" is taken his theory that virtue consists in submission to an immutable and necessary order. Locke, the founder of English empiricism, in his celebrated "Essay on the Human Understanding," refutes here the existence of innate practical principles, and interprets good and evil as pleasure and pain, but nevertheless regards a divine law as "the true touchstone of rectitude." Samuel Clarke's "Discourse on Natural Religion," in the sections reproduced, places ethics among the sciences capable of demonstration from propositions which are as incontestable as those of mathematics. In the "Inquiry concerning Virtue and Merit" the eloquent Shaftesbury insists on the naturalness of man's social affections, and defines virtue as "a conformity of our affections with our natural sense of the sublime and beautiful in things." A brief section from Mandeville's "Fable of the Bees" is included, since it stimulated deeper inquiries on the part of those who opposed his theory, that moral virtue is alien to the natural man. Wollaston, a disciple of Clarke, in the "Religion of Nature Delineated," bases the distinction of good and evil on the respect which men's actions bear to truth. The "Three Sermons" of Bishop Butler printed in this work clearly reveal a fundamental difference between the two great

ethical periods, the Greco-Roman and the English. In the former the one regulative principle of reason of the "wise" man is opposed to the uncultivated impulses of the unwise; in the latter period "conscience," or the reflective self-estimate, is opposed to all unreflective tendencies, whether good or bad. Hutcheson's "Inquiry Concerning Moral Good and Evil" is perhaps best known for the doctrine reproduced in the present text that moral distinctions are made known by a special capacity of the soul designated as the "moral sense." Hartley's "Observations on Man," as stimulated by Gay, makes the first systematic application of the laws of association to the explanation of moral phenomena, and is thus the source of modern ethical psychology. In Hume's "Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals," and Adam Smith's "Theory of Moral Sentiments," alike, sympathy is regarded as the sufficient basis of moral approbation, without recourse to a "moral sense," and the trend of later utilitarianism is thereby in no small degree anticipated. Brief chapters from Helvétius' "De l'Esprit" and Paley's "Moral and Political Philosophy" foreshadow Benthamism in the identification of probity or virtue with action productive of happiness. From Bentham's "Morals and Legislation" are printed the fundamental principles of the first really complete and thoroughgoing system of utilitarianism. Price, in his "Review of the Principal Questions in Morals," maintains the existence of other ultimate moral principles, in addition to the utilitarian principle of general benevolence; and Reid, in his "Active Powers of Man," appeals to common sense as the final arbiter of moral evidence. In German ethics, Kant's exposition of the sublime moral law, or categorical imperative, has been taken from "The Metaphysic of Morals," more particularly because the "Modern Classical Philosophers" already contains his "Critique of Practical Reason." Fichte's deduction of the principle of morality is reproduced from his "Science of Ethics"; and Hegel's conception of the universal will as objectively presented in the state is reproduced from his "Philosophy of Right." Pessimism finds expression in the glowing utterances from Schopenhauer's "World as Will and Idea." The trans-

lation from Beneke's "Natural System of Morals" offers a psychological basis for ethics, in his distinctions of worth subsisting among psychical functions. Classical extracts illustrating Mill's utilitarianism, Spencer's ethics of evolution, and Sidgwick's philosophical intuitionism or universalistic hedonism, clearly reveal the development of later utilitarianism. Similarly, vital chapters setting forth Bradley's self-realization, Green's development of the moral ideal, and Martineau's idiopsychological ethics present in a cumulative way the most fundamental principles of the recent ethics of intuitionism.

The foregoing sketch traces the attempt made in this work to give for the first time in a single volume, selections which may serve to exhibit nearly in chronological order the chief doctrines of the classical moralists, alike in ancient, mediæval, and modern ethics. Numerous texts will be found in the work, that are dispersed in books either difficult of access or belonging to expensive sets. Translations of the ancient classics and of the continental moralists have, so far as is possible, been obtained from writers who have won recognition for accuracy and literary merit. In this book appear also for the first time translations from the Latin, in part, of Abelard's "Ethics, or Know Thyself" and of More's "Enchiridion Ethicum," for which the author is much indebted to the courtesy of his colleague, Professor Edward Kennard Rand, of the classical department in Harvard University. An important chapter from the German of Beneke's "Natural System of Morals" has been translated by the editor, with the desire to secure more serious study of a moralist who deserves much greater recognition than he has heretofore received. His thanks for permission to reprint selections of moralists are also due various publishers and translators, whose names will be found at the beginning of the respective chapters accompanying the titles of the works employed. The book will serve its highest end if its representative selections shall inspire the perusal of the complete works of the classical moralists.

BENJAMIN RAND.

EMERSON HALL, HARVARD UNIVERSITY.

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THE CLASSICAL MORALISTS

SOCRATES
(469-399 B.C.)

From XENOPHON'S MEMORABILIA OF SOCRATES

Translated from the Greek by*
JOHN SELBY WATSON

BOOK III. CHAPTER VIII. ON THE GOOD AND BEAUTIFUL

1. WHEN Aristippus attempted to confute Socrates, as he himself had previously been confuted by him, Socrates, wishing to benefit those who were with him, gave his answers, not like those who are on their guard lest their words be perverted, but like those who are persuaded that they ought above all things to do what is right. 2. What Aristippus had asked him, was, "whether he knew anything good," in order that if he should say any such thing as food, or drink, or money, or health, or strength, or courage, he might prove that it was sometimes an evil. But Socrates, reflecting that if anything troubles us, we want something to relieve us from it, replied, as it seemed best to do, "Do you ask me whether I know anything good for a fever?" 3. "I do not." "Anything good for soreness of the eyes?" "No." "For hunger?" "No, nor for hunger either." "Well then," concluded Socrates, "if you ask me whether I know anything good that is good for nothing, I neither know anything, nor wish to know."

* From Ξενοφῶντος Σωκράτους Ἀπομνημονεύματα. Reprinted from *Xenophon's Memorabilia of Socrates*, translated by J. S. Watson, London, 1859.

4. Aristippus again asking him if he knew anything beautiful, he replied, "Many things." "Are they then," inquired Aristippus, "all like each other?" "Some of them," answered Socrates, "are as unlike one another as it is possible for them to be." "How then," said he, "can what is beautiful be unlike what is beautiful?" "Because, assuredly," replied Socrates, "one man, who is beautifully formed for wrestling, is unlike another who is beautifully formed for running; and a shield, which is beautifully formed for defence, is as unlike as possible to a dart, which is beautifully formed for being forcibly and swiftly hurled." 5. "You answer me," said Aristippus, "in the same manner as when I asked you whether you knew anything good." "And do you imagine," said Socrates, "that the good is one thing, and the beautiful another? Do you not know that with reference to the same objects all things are both beautiful and good? Virtue, for instance, is not good with regard to some things and beautiful with regard to others; and persons, in the same way, are called beautiful and good with reference to the same objects; and human bodies, too, with reference to the same objects, appear beautiful and good; and in like manner all other things, whatever men use, are considered beautiful and good with reference to the objects for which they are serviceable." 6. "Can a dung-basket, then," said Aristippus, "be a beautiful thing?" "Yes, by Jupiter," returned Socrates, "and a golden shield may be an ugly thing, if the one be beautifully formed for its particular uses, and the other ill formed?" 7. "Do you say, then, that the same things may be both beautiful and ugly?" "Yes, undoubtedly, and also that they may be good and bad; for oftentimes what is good for hunger is bad for a fever, and what is good for a fever is bad for hunger; oftentimes what is beautiful in regard to running is the reverse in regard to wrestling, and what is beautiful in regard to wrestling is the reverse in regard to running; for whatever is good is also beautiful, in regard to purposes for which it is well adapted, and whatever is bad is the reverse of beautiful, in regard to purposes for which it is ill adapted."

8. When Socrates said, too, that the same houses that were beautiful were also useful, he appeared to me to instruct us what

sort of houses we ought to build. He reasoned on the subject thus, "Should not he who purposes to have a house such as it ought to be, contrive that it may be most pleasant, and at the same time most useful, to live in?" 9. This being admitted, he said, "Is it not then pleasant to have it cool in summer, and warm in winter?" When his hearers had assented to this, he said, "In houses, then, that look to the south, does not the sun, in the winter, shine into the porticoes, while, in the summer, it passes over our heads, and above the roof, and casts a shade? If it is well, therefore, that houses should thus be made, ought we not to build the parts towards the south higher, that the sun in winter may not be shut out, and the parts toward the north lower, that the cold winds may not fall violently on them? 10. To sum up the matter briefly, that would be the most pleasant and the most beautiful residence, in which the owner, at all seasons, would find the most satisfactory retreat, and deposit what belongs to him with the greatest safety."

Paintings, and coloured decorations of the walls, deprive us, he thought, of more pleasure than they give.

The most suitable ground for temples and altars, he said, was such as was most open to view, and least trodden by the public; for that it was pleasant for people to pray as they looked on them, and pleasant to approach them in purity.

CHAPTER IX. ON VIRTUES AND VICES

1. Being asked, again, whether *Fortitude* was a quality acquired by education, or bestowed by nature, "I think," said he, "that as one body is by nature stronger for enduring toil than another body, so one mind may be by nature more courageous in meeting dangers than another mind; for I see that men who are brought up under the same laws and institutions differ greatly from each other in courage. 2. I am of opinion, however, that every natural disposition may be improved, as to fortitude, by training and exercise; for it is evident that the Scythians and Thracians would not dare to take bucklers and spears and fight with the Lace-

dæmonians; and it is certain that the Lacedæmonians would not like to fight the Thracians with small shields and javelins, or the Scythians with bows. 3. In other things, also, I see that men differ equally from one another by nature, and make great improvements by practice; from which it is evident that it concerns all, as well the naturally ingenious as the naturally dull, to learn and study those arts in which they desire to become worthy of commendation."

4. *Prudence* and *Temperance* he did not distinguish; for he deemed that he who knew what was honourable and good, and how to practise it, and who knew what was dishonourable, and how to avoid it, was both prudent and temperate. Being also asked whether he thought that those who knew what they ought to do, but did the contrary, were prudent and temperate, he replied, "No more than I think the [openly] imprudent and intemperate to be so; for I consider that all [prudent and temperate] persons choose from what is possible what they judge for their interest, and do it; and I therefore deem those who do not act [thus] judiciously to be neither prudent nor temperate."

5. He said, too, that justice, and every other virtue, was [a part of] prudence, for that everything just, and everything done agreeably to virtue, was honourable and good; that those who could discern those things, would never prefer anything else to them; that those who could not discern them, would never be able to do them, but would even go wrong if they attempted to do them; and that the prudent, accordingly, did what was honourable and good, but that the imprudent could not do it, but went wrong even if they attempted to do it; and that since, therefore, all just actions, and all actions that are honourable and good, are done in agreement with virtue, it is manifest that justice, and every other virtue, is [comprehended in] prudence.

6. The opposite to prudence, he said, was *Madness;* he did not, however, regard ignorance as madness; though for a man to be ignorant of himself, and to fancy and believe that he knew what he did not know, he considered to be something closely bordering on madness. The multitude, he observed, do not say that those are mad who make mistakes in matters of which most

people are ignorant, but call those only mad who make mistakes in affairs with which most people are acquainted; 7. for if a man should think himself so tall as to stoop when going through the gates in the city wall, or so strong as to try to lift up houses, or attempt anything else that is plainly impossible to all men, they say that he is mad; but those who make mistakes in small matters are not thought by the multitude to be mad; but just as they call "strong desire" "love," so they call "great disorder of intellect" "madness."

8. Considering what *Envy* was, he decided it to be a certain uneasiness, not such as arises, however, at the ill success of friends, nor such as is felt at the good success of enemies, but those only he said were envious who were annoyed at the good success of their friends. When some expressed surprise, that any one who had a friendly feeling for another should feel uneasy at his good fortune, he reminded them that many are so disposed towards others as to be incapable of neglecting them if they are unfortunate, but would relieve them in ill fortune, though they are uneasy at their good fortune. This feeling, he said, could never arise in the breast of a sensible man, but that the foolish were constantly affected with it.

9. Considering what *Idleness* was, he said that he found most men did something; for that dice-players and buffoons did something; but he said that all such persons were idle, for it was in their power to go and do something better; he observed that a man was not idle, however, in passing from a better employment to a worse, but that, if he did so, he, as he [previously] had occupation, acted in that respect viciously.

10. *Kings* and *Commanders*, he said, were not those who held sceptres merely, or those elected by the multitude, or those who gained authority by lot, or those who attained it by violence or deceit, but those who knew how to command. 11. For when some one admitted that it was the part of a commander to enjoin what another should do, and the part of him who was commanded, to obey, he showed that in a ship the skilful man is the commander, and that the owner and all the other people in the ship were obedient to the man of knowledge; that, in agriculture, those

who had farms, in sickness, those who were ill, in bodily exercises, those who practised them, and indeed all other people, who had any business requiring care, personally took the management of it if they thought that they understood it, but if not, that they were not only ready to obey men of knowledge who were present, but even sent for such as were absent, in order that, by yielding to their directions, they might do what was proper. In spinning, too, he pointed out that women commanded men, as the one knew how to spin, and the other did not know. 12. But if any one remarked in reply to these observations, that a tyrant is at liberty not to obey judicious advisers, he would say, "And how is he at liberty not to obey, when a penalty hangs over him that does not obey a wise monitor? for in whatever affair a person does not obey a prudent adviser, he will doubtless err, and, by erring, will incur a penalty." 13. If any one also observed that a tyrant might put to death a wise counsellor, "And do you think," he would say, "that he who puts to death the best of his allies will go unpunished, or that he will be exposed only to casual punishment? Whether do you suppose that a man who acts thus would live in safety, or would be likely, rather, by such conduct, to bring immediate destruction on himself?"

14. When some one asked him what object of study he thought best for a man, he replied, "good conduct." When he asked him again whether he thought "good fortune" an object of study, he answered, "'Fortune' and 'Conduct' I think entirely opposed; for, for a person to light on anything that he wants without seeking it, I consider to be 'good fortune,' but to achieve anything successfully by learning and study, I regard as 'good conduct;' and those who make this their object of study appear to me to do well."

15. The best men, and those most beloved by the gods, he observed, were those who, in agriculture, performed their agricultural duties well, those who, in medicine, performed their medical duties well, and those who, in political offices, performed their public duties well; but he who did nothing well, he said, was neither useful for any purpose, nor acceptable to the gods.

BOOK IV. CHAPTER II. ON SELF-KNOWLEDGE

1. I will now show how Socrates addressed himself to such as thought that they had attained the highest degree of knowledge, and prided themselves on their ability. Hearing that Euthydemus, surnamed the Handsome, had collected many writings of the most celebrated poets and sophists, and imagined that by that means he was outstripping his contemporaries in accomplishments, and had great hopes that he would excel them all in talent for speaking and acting, and finding, by his first inquiries about him, that he had not yet engaged in public affairs on account of his youth, but that, when he wished to do any business, he usually sat in a bridle-maker's shop near the Forum, he went himself to it, accompanied by some of his hearers; 2. and as somebody asked, first of all, "whether it was from his intercourse with some of the wise men, or from his own natural talents, that Themistocles attained such a pre-eminence above his fellow-citizens, that the republic looked to him whenever it wanted the service of a man of ability," Socrates, wishing to excite the attention of Euthydemus, said that "it was absurd to believe that men could not become skilled in the lowest mechanical arts without competent instructors, and to imagine that ability to govern a state, the most important of all arts, might spring up in men by the unassisted efforts of nature."

8. Socrates used at first to make such remarks, while Euthydemus merely listened; but when he observed that he stayed, while he conversed, with more willingness, and hearkened to him with more attention, he at last came to the bridle-maker's shop unattended. As Euthydemus sat down beside him, he said, "Tell me, Euthydemus, have you really, as I hear, collected many of the writings of men who are said to have been wise?" "I have indeed, Socrates," replied he, "and I am still collecting, intending to persevere till I get as many as I possibly can." 9. "By Juno," rejoined Socrates, "I feel admiration for you, because you have not preferred acquiring treasures of silver and gold rather than of wisdom; for it is plain you consider that sil-

ver and gold are unable to make men better, but that the thoughts of wise men enrich their possessors with virtue." Euthydemus was delighted to hear this commendation, believing that he was thought by Socrates to have sought wisdom in the right course. 10. Socrates, observing that he was gratified with the praise, said, "And in what particular art do you wish to become skilful, that you collect these writings?" As Euthydemus continued silent, considering what reply he should make, Socrates again asked, "Do you wish to become a physician? for there are many writings of physicians." "Not I, by Jupiter," replied Euthydemus. "Do you wish to become an architect, then? for a man of knowledge is needed for that art also." "No, indeed," answered he. "Do you wish to become a good geometrician, like Theodorus?" "Nor a geometrician either," said he. "Do you wish then to become an astronomer?" said Socrates. As Euthydemus said "No," to this, "Do you wish then," added Socrates, "to become a rhapsodist, for they say that you are in possession of all the poems of Homer?" "No indeed," said he, "for I know that the rhapsodists, though eminently knowing in the poems of Homer, are, as men, extremely foolish." 11. "You are perhaps desirous then," proceeded Socrates, "of attaining that talent by which men become skilled in governing states, in managing households, able to command, and qualified to benefit other men as well as themselves." "I indeed greatly desire," said he, "Socrates, to acquire that talent." "By Jupiter," returned Socrates, "you aspire to a most honourable accomplishment, and a most exalted art, for it is the art of kings, and is called the royal art. But," added he, "have you ever considered whether it is possible for a man who is not just to be eminent in that art?" "I have certainly," replied he; "and it is not possible for a man to be even a good citizen without justice." 12. "Have you yourself, then, made yourself master of that virtue?" "I think," said he, "Socrates, that I shall be found not less just than any other man." "Are there then works of just men, as there are works of artisans?" "There are, doubtless," replied he. "Then," said Socrates, "as artisans are able to show their works, would not just men be able also to tell their works?" "And why

should not I," asked Euthydemus, "be able to tell the works of justice; as also indeed those of injustice; for we may see and hear of no small number of them every day?"

13. "Are you willing then," said Socrates, "that we should make a *delta* on this side, and an *alpha* on that, and then that we should put whatever seems to us to be a work of justice under the *delta*, and whatever seems to be a work of injustice under the *alpha?*" "If you think that we need those letters," said Euthydemus, "make them." 14. Socrates, having made the letters as he proposed, asked, "Does falsehood then exist among mankind?" "It does assuredly," replied he. "Under which head shall we place it?" "Under injustice, certainly." "Does deceit also exist?" "Unquestionably." "Under which head shall we place that?" "Evidently under injustice." "Does mischievousness exist?" "Undoubtedly." "And the enslaving of men?" "That, too, prevails." "And shall neither of these things be placed by us under justice, Euthydemus?" "It would be strange if they should be," said he. 15. "But," said Socrates, "if a man, being chosen to lead an army, should reduce to slavery an unjust and hostile people, should we say that he committed injustice?" "No, certainly," replied he. "Should we not rather say that he acted justly?" "Indisputably." "And if, in the course of the war with them, he should practise deceit?" "That also would be just," said he. "And if he should steal and carry off their property, would he not do what was just?" "Certainly," said Euthydemus; "but I thought at first that you asked these questions only with reference to our friends." "Then," said Socrates, "all that we have placed under the head of injustice, we must also place under that of justice?" "It seems so," replied Euthydemus. 16. "Do you agree, then," continued Socrates, "that, having so placed them, we should make a new distinction, that it is just to do such things with regard to enemies, but unjust to do them with regard to friends, and that towards his friends our general should be as guileless as possible?" "By all means," replied Euthydemus. 17. "Well, then," said Socrates, "if a general, seeing his army dispirited, should tell them, inventing a falsehood, that auxiliaries were coming, and should, by that

invention, check the despondency of his troops, under which head should we place such an act of deceit?" "It appears to me," said Euthydemus, "that we must place it under justice." "And if a father, when his son requires medicine, and refuses to take it, should deceive him, and give him the medicine as ordinary food, and, by adopting such deception, should restore him to health, under which head must we place such an act of deceit?" "It appears to me that we must put it under the same head." "And if a person, when his friend was in despondency, should, through fear that he might kill himself, steal or take away his sword, or any other weapon, under which head must we place that act?" "That, assuredly, we must place under justice." 18. "You say, then," said Socrates, "that not even towards our friends must we act on all occasions without deceit?" "We must not indeed," said he, "for I retract what I said before, if I may be permitted to do so." "It is indeed much better that you should be permitted," said Socrates, "than that you should not place actions on the right side. 19. But of those who deceive their friends in order to injure them (that we may not leave even this point unconsidered), which of the two is the more unjust, he who does so intentionally or he who does so involuntarily?" "Indeed, Socrates," said Euthydemus, "I no longer put confidence in the answers which I give; for all that I said before appears to me now to be quite different from what I then thought; however, let me venture to say that he who deceives intentionally is more unjust than he who deceives involuntarily."

20. "Does it appear to you, then, that there is a way of learning and knowing what is just, as there is of learning and knowing how to read and write?" "I think there is." "And which should you consider the better scholar, him who should purposely write or read incorrectly, or him who should do so unawares?" "Him who should do so purposely, for, whenever he pleased, he would be able to do both correctly." "He, therefore, that purposely writes incorrectly may be a good scholar, but he who does so involuntarily is destitute of scholarship?" "How can it be otherwise?" "And whether does he who lies and deceives intentionally know what is just, or he who does so

unawares?" "Doubtless he who does so intentionally." "You therefore say that he who knows how to write and read is a better scholar than he who does not know?" "Yes." "And that he who knows what is just is more just than he who does not know?" "I seem to say so; but I appear to myself to say this I know not how." 21. "But what would you think of the man, who, wishing to tell the truth, should never give the same account of the same thing, but, in speaking of the same road, should say at one time that it led towards the east, and at another towards the west, and, in stating the result of the same calculation, should sometimes assert it to be greater and sometimes less, what, I say, would you think of such a man?" "It would be quite clear that he knew nothing of what he thought he knew."

22. "Do you know any persons called slave-like?" "I do." "Whether for their knowledge or their ignorance?" "For their ignorance, certainly." "Is it then for their ignorance of working in brass that they receive this appellation?" "Not at all." "Is it for their ignorance of the art of building?" "Nor for that." "Or for their ignorance of shoemaking?" "Not on any one of these accounts; for the contrary is the case, as most of those who know such trades are servile." "Is this, then, an appellation of those who are ignorant of what is honourable, and good, and just?" "It appears so to me." 23. "It therefore becomes us to exert ourselves in every way to avoid being like slaves." "But, by the gods, Socrates," rejoined Euthydemus, "I firmly believed that I was pursuing that course of study, by which I should, as I expected, be made fully acquainted with all that was proper to be known by a man striving after honour and virtue; but now, how dispirited must you think I feel, when I see that, with all my previous labour, I am not even able to answer a question about what I ought most of all to know, and am acquainted with no other course which I may pursue to become better!"

24. Socrates then said, "Tell me, Euthydemus, have you ever gone to Delphi?" "Yes, twice," replied he. "And did you observe what is written somewhere on the temple wall, KNOW THYSELF?" "I did." "And did you take no thought of that inscription, or did you attend to it, and try to examine yourself, to ascer-

tain what sort of character you are?" "I did not indeed try, for I thought that I knew very well already, since I should hardly know anything else if I did not know myself." 25. "But whether does he seem to you to know himself, who knows his own name merely, or he who (like people buying horses, who do not think that they know the horse that they want to know, until they have ascertained whether he is tractable or unruly, whether he is strong or weak, swift or slow, and how he is as to other points which are serviceable or disadvantageous in the use of a horse, so he), having ascertained with regard to himself how he is adapted for the service of mankind, knows his own abilities?" "It appears to me, I must confess, that he who does not know his own abilities, does not know himself." 26. "But is it not evident," said Socrates, "that men enjoy a great number of blessings in consequence of knowing themselves, and incur a great number of evils, through being deceived in themselves? For they who know themselves know what is suitable for them, and distinguish between what they can do and what they cannot; and, by doing what they know how to do, procure for themselves what they need, and are prosperous, and, by abstaining from what they do not know, live blamelessly, and avoid being unfortunate. By this knowledge of themselves, too, they can form an opinion of other men, and, by their experience of the rest of mankind, obtain for themselves what is good, and guard against what is evil. 27. But they who do not know themselves, but are deceived in their own powers, are in similar case with regard to other men, and other human affairs, and neither understand what they require, nor what they are doing, nor the characters of those with whom they connect themselves, but, being in error as to all these particulars, they fail to obtain what is good, and fall into evil. 28. They, on the other hand, who understand what they take in hand, succeed in what they attempt, and become esteemed and honoured; those who resemble them in character willingly form connexions with them; those who are unsuccessful in life desire to be assisted with their advice, and to prefer them to themselves; they place in them their hopes of good, and love them, on all these accounts, beyond all other men. 29. But those, again, who do not know what they

are doing, who make an unhappy choice in life, and are unsuccessful in what they attempt, not only incur losses and sufferings in their own affairs, but become, in consequence, disreputable and ridiculous, and drag out their lives in contempt and dishonour. Among states, too, you see that such as, from ignorance of their own strength, go to war with others that are more powerful, are, some of them, utterly overthrown, and others reduced from freedom to slavery."

30. "Be assured, therefore," replied Euthydemus, "that I feel convinced we must consider self-knowledge of the highest value; but as to the way in which we must begin to seek self-knowledge, I look to you for information, if you will kindly impart it to me." 31. "Well, then," said Socrates, "you doubtless fully understand what sort of things are good, and what sort are evil." "Yes, by Jupiter," replied Euthydemus, "for if I did not understand such things, I should be in a worse condition than slaves are." "Come then," said Socrates, "tell me what they are." "That is not difficult," said he, "for, in the first place, health I consider to be a good, and sickness an evil, and, in the next, looking to the causes of each of them, as drink, food, and employments, I esteem such as conduce to health to be good, and such as lead to sickness to be evil." 32. "Consequently," said Socrates, "health and sickness themselves, when they are the causes of any good, will be good, and when they are the causes of any evil, will be evil." "But when," exclaimed Euthydemus, "can health be the cause of evil, and sickness of good?" "When, for example," said Socrates, "some portion of a community, from being in good health, take part in a disgraceful expedition by land, or a ruinous voyage by sea, or in any other such matters, which are sufficiently common, and lose their lives, while others, who are left behind from ill-health, are saved." "What you say is true," said Euthydemus, "but you see that some men share in successful enterprises from being in health, while others, from being in sickness, are left out of them." "Whether then," said Socrates, "are those things which are sometimes beneficial, and sometimes injurious, goods, rather, or evils?" "Nothing, by Jupiter, is to be settled with regard to them by considering thus.

33. But as to wisdom, Socrates, it is indisputably a good thing; for what business will not one who is wise conduct better than one who is untaught?" "Have you not heard, then, of Dædalus," said Socrates, "how he was made prisoner by Minos and compelled to serve him as a slave; how he was cut off, at once, from his country and from liberty, and how, when he endeavoured to escape with his son, he lost the child, and was unable to save himself, but was carried away among barbarians, and made a second time a slave?" "Such a story is told, indeed," said Euthydemus. "Have you not heard, too, of the sufferings of Palamedes? for everybody says that it was for his wisdom he was envied and put to death by Ulysses." "That, too, is said," replied Euthydemus. "And how many other men do you think have been carried off to the king on account of their wisdom, and made slaves there?"

34. "But as to happiness, Socrates," said Euthydemus, "that at least appears to be an indisputable good." "Yes, Euthydemus," replied Socrates, "if we make it consist in things that are themselves indisputably good." "But what," said he, "among things constituting happiness can be a doubtful good?" "Nothing," answered Socrates, "unless we join with it beauty, or strength, or wealth, or glory, or any other such thing." 35. "But we must assuredly join them with it," said Euthydemus; "for how can a person be happy without them?" "We shall then join with it, by Jupiter," said Socrates, "things from which many grievous calamities happen to mankind; for many, on account of their beauty, are ruined by those who are maddened with passion for their youthful attractions; many, through confidence in their strength, have entered upon undertakings too great for it, and involved themselves in no small disasters; many, in consequence of their wealth, have become enervated, been plotted against, and destroyed; and many, from the glory and power that they have acquired in their country, have suffered the greatest calamities." 36. "Well, then," said Euthydemus, "if I do not say what is right when I praise happiness, I confess that I do not know what we ought to pray for to the gods."

CHAPTER VI. THE SOCRATIC METHOD

1. I will now endeavour to show that Socrates rendered those who associated with him more skilful in argument. For he thought that those who knew the nature of things severally, would be able to explain them to others; but as to those who did not know, he said that it was not surprising that they fell into error themselves, and led others into it. He therefore never ceased to reason with his associates about the nature of things. To go through all the terms that he defined, and to show how he defined them, would be a long task; but I will give as many instances as I think will suffice to show the nature of his reasoning.

2. In the first place, then, he reasoned of PIETY, in some such way as this. "Tell me," said he, "Euthydemus, what sort of feeling do you consider piety to be?" "The most noble of all feelings," replied he. "Can you tell me, then, who is a pious man?" "The man, I think, who honours the gods." "Is it allowable to pay honour to the gods in any way that one pleases?" "No; there are certain laws in conformity with which we must pay our honours to them." 3. "He, then, who knows these laws, will know how he must honour the gods?" "I think so." "He therefore who knows how to pay honour to the gods, will not think that he ought to pay it otherwise than as he knows?" "Doubtless not." "But does any one pay honours to the gods otherwise than as he thinks that he ought to pay them?" "I think not." 4. "He therefore who knows what is agreeable to the laws with regard to the gods, will honour the gods in agreement with the laws?" "Certainly." "Does not he, then, who honours the gods agreeably to the laws honour them as he ought?" "How can he do otherwise?" "And he who honours them as he ought, is pious?" "Certainly." "He therefore who knows what is agreeable to the laws with regard to the gods, may be justly defined by us as a pious man?" "So it appears to me," said Euthydemus.

5. "But is it allowable for a person to conduct himself towards other men in whatever way he pleases?" "No; but with respect to men also, he who knows what is in conformity with

the laws, and how men ought, according to them, to conduct themselves towards each other, will be an observer of the laws." "Do not those, then, who conduct themselves towards each other according to what is in conformity with the laws, conduct themselves towards each other as they ought?" "How can it be otherwise?" "Do not those, therefore, who conduct themselves towards each other as they ought, conduct themselves well?" "Certainly." "Do not those, then, that conduct themselves well towards each other, act properly in transactions between man and man?" "Surely." "Do not those, then, who obey the laws, do what is just?" "Undoubtedly." 6. "And do you know what sort of actions are called just?" "Those which the laws sanction." "Those, therefore, who do what the laws sanction, do what is just, and what they ought?" "How can it be otherwise?" "Those who do just things, therefore, are just?" "I think so." "Do you think that any persons yield obedience to the laws who do not know what the laws sanction?" "I do not." "And do you think that any who know what they ought to do, think that they ought not to do it?" "I do not think so." "And do you know any persons that do other things than those which they think they ought to do?" "I do not." "Those, therefore, who know what is agreeable to the laws in regard to men, do what is just?" "Certainly." "And are not those who do what is just, just men?" "Who else can be so?" "Shall we not define rightly, therefore," concluded Socrates, "if we define those to be just who know what is agreeable to the laws in regard to men?" "It appears so to me," said Euthydemus.

7. "And what shall we say that WISDOM is? Tell me, whether do men seem to you to be wise, in things which they know, or in things which they do not know?" "In what they know, certainly; for how can a man be wise in things of which he knows nothing?" "Those, then, who are wise, are wise by their knowledge?" "By what else can a man be wise, if not by his knowledge?" "Do you think wisdom, then, to be anything else than that by which men are wise?" "I do not." "Is knowledge, then, wisdom?" "It appears so to me." "Does it appear to you, however, that it is possible for a man to know all things that are?"

"No, by Jupiter; not even, as I think, a comparatively small portion of them." "It is not therefore possible for a man to be wise in all things?" "No, indeed." "Every man is wise, therefore, in that only of which he has a knowledge?" "So it seems to me."

8. "Shall we thus, too, Euthydemus," said he, "inquire what is GOOD?" "How?" said Euthydemus. "Does the same thing appear to you to be beneficial to everybody?" "No." "And does not that which is beneficial to one person appear to you to be sometimes hurtful to another?" "Assuredly." "Would you say, then, that anything is good that is not beneficial?" "I would not." "What is beneficial, therefore, is good, to whomsoever it is beneficial?" "It appears so to me," said Euthydemus.

9. "And can we define the BEAUTIFUL in any other way than if you term whatever is beautiful, whether a person, or a vase, or anything else whatsoever, beautiful for whatever purpose you know that it is beautiful?" "No, indeed," said Euthydemus. "For whatever purpose, then, anything may be useful, for that purpose it is beautiful to use it?" "Certainly." "And is anything beautiful for any other purpose than that for which it is beautiful to use it?" "For no other purpose," replied he. "What is useful is beautiful, therefore, for that purpose for which is it beautiful?" "So I think," said he.

10. "As to COURAGE, Euthydemus," said Socrates, "do you think it is to be numbered among excellent things?" "I think it one of the most excellent," replied Euthydemus. "But you do not think courage a thing of use for small occasions." "No, by Jupiter, but for the very greatest." "Does it appear to you to be useful, with regard to formidable and dangerous things, to be ignorant of their character?" "By no means." "They, therefore, who do not fear such things, because they do not know what they are, are not courageous?" "Certainly not; for, in that case, many madmen and even cowards would be courageous." "And what do you say of those who fear things that are not formidable?" "Still less, by Jupiter, should they be called courageous." "Those, then, that are *good*, with reference to formidable and dangerous things, you consider to be courageous, and those that

are *bad*, cowardly?" "Certainly." 11. "But do you think that any other persons are *good*, with reference to terrible and dangerous circumstances, except those who are able to conduct themselves well under them?" "No, those only," said he. "And you think those *bad* with regard to them, who are of such a character as to conduct themselves badly under them?" "Whom else can I think so?" "Do not each, then, conduct themselves under them as they think they ought?" "How can it be otherwise?" "Do those, therefore, who do not conduct themselves properly under them, know how they ought to conduct themselves under them?" "Doubtless not." "Those then who know how they ought to conduct themselves under them, can do so?" "And they alone." "Do those, therefore, who do not fail under such circumstances, conduct themselves badly under them?" "I think not." "Those, then, who do conduct themselves badly under them, do fail?" "It seems so." "Those, therefore, who know how to conduct themselves well in terrible and dangerous circumstances are courageous, and those who fail to do so are cowards?" "They at least appear so to me," said Euthydemus.

12. Monarchy and tyranny he considered to be both forms of government, but conceived that they differed greatly from one another; for a government over men with their own consent, and in conformity with the laws of free states, he regarded as a monarchy; but a government over men against their will, and not according to the laws of free states, but just as the ruler pleased, a tyranny; and wherever magistrates were appointed from among those who complied with the injunctions of the laws, he considered the government to be an aristocracy; wherever they were appointed according to their wealth, a plutocracy; and wherever they were appointed from among the whole people, a democracy.

13. Whenever any person contradicted him on any point, who had nothing definite to say, and who perhaps asserted, without proof, that some person, whom he mentioned, was wiser, or better skilled in political affairs, or possessed of greater courage, or worthier in some such respect [than some other whom Socrates had mentioned], he would recall the whole argument, in

some such way as the following, to the primary proposition: 14. "Do you say that he whom you commend, is *a better citizen* than he whom I commend?" "I do say so." "Why should we not then consider, in the first place, what is the duty of *a good citizen?*" "Let us do so." "Would not he then be superior in the management of the public money who should make the state richer?" "Undoubtedly." "And he in war who should make it victorious over its enemies?" "Assuredly." "And in an embassy he who should make friends of foes?" "Doubtless." "And he in addressing the people who should check dissension and inspire them with unanimity?" "I think so." When the discussion was thus brought back to fundamental principles, the truth was made evident to those who had opposed him.

15. When he himself went through any subject in argument, he proceeded upon propositions of which the truth was generally acknowledged, thinking that a sure foundation was thus formed for his reasoning. Accordingly, whenever he spoke, he, of all men that I have known, most readily prevailed on his hearers to assent to his arguments; and he used to say that Homer had attributed to Ulysses the character of *a sure orator*, as being able to form his reasoning on points acknowledged by all mankind.

PLATO
(427-347)

THE REPUBLIC

Translated from the Greek by*
BENJAMIN JOWETT

BOOK I. THE FUNCTION OF THE SOUL

SOCRATES THRASYMACHUS

Steph. 352.

WELL then, proceed with your answers, and let me have the remainder of my repast. For we have already shown that the just are clearly wiser and better and abler than the unjust, and that the unjust are incapable of common action; nay more, that to speak as we did of evil-doers ever acting vigorously together, is not strictly true, for if they had been perfectly evil, they would have laid hands upon one another; but it is evident that there must have been some remnant of justice in them, which enabled them to combine; if there had not been they would have injured one another as well as their victims; they were but half-villains in their enterprises, for had they been whole villains, and utterly unjust, they would have been wholly incapable of action. That, as I believe, is the truth of the matter, and not what you said at first. But whether the just have a better and happier life than the unjust is a further question which we also proposed to consider. I think that they have, and for the reasons which I have given; but still I should like to examine further, for no light matter is at stake, nothing less than the rule of human life.

Proceed.

I will proceed by asking a question: Would you not say that a horse has some end?

* From Πλάτωνος Πολιτεία. Reprinted from *The Dialogues of Plato*, translated by B. Jowett, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1871; 3d rev. ed. 1892, vol. iii.

I should.

And the end or use of a horse or of anything would be that which could not be accomplished, or not so well accomplished, by any other thing?

I do not understand, he said.

Let me explain: Can you see, except with the eye?

Certainly not.

Or hear, except with the ear?

No.

These then may be truly said to be the ends of these organs?

They may.

But you can cut off a vine-branch with a carving-knife or with a chisel and in many other ways?

Of course.

And yet not so well as with a pruning-hook made for the purpose?

True.

May we not say that this is the end of a pruning-hook?

We may.

Then now I think you will have no difficulty in understanding my meaning when I said that the end of anything was that which could not be accomplished, or not so well accomplished, by any other thing?

I understand your meaning, he said, and assent.

And that to which an end is appointed has also an excellence? Need I ask again whether the eye has an end?

It has.

And has not the eye an excellence?

Yes.

And the ear has an end and an excellence also?

True.

And the same is true of all other things; they have each of them an end and a special excellence?

That is so.

Well, and can the eyes fulfil their end if they are wanting in their own proper excellence and have a defect instead?

How can they, he said, if they are blind and cannot see?

You mean to say, if they have lost their proper excellence, which is sight; but I have not arrived at that point yet. I would rather ask the question more generally, and only enquire whether the things which fulfil their ends fulfil them by their own proper excellence, and fail of fulfilling them by their own defect?

Certainly, he replied.

I might say the same of the ears; when deprived of their own proper excellence they cannot fulfil their end?

True.

And the same observation will apply to all other things?

I agree.

Well, and has not the soul an end which nothing else can fulfil? for example, to superintend and command and deliberate and the like. Are not these functions proper to the soul, and can they rightly be assigned to any other?

To no other.

And is not life to be reckoned among the ends of the soul?

Assuredly, he said.

And has not the soul an excellence also?

Yes.

And can she or can she not fulfil her ends when deprived of that excellence?

She cannot.

Then an evil soul must necessarily be an evil ruler, and the good soul a good ruler?

Yes, necessarily.

And we have admitted that justice is the excellence of the soul, and injustice the defect of the soul?

That has been admitted.

Then the just soul and the just man will live well, and the unjust man will live ill?

That is what your argument proves.

And he who lives well will be blessed and happy, and he who lives ill the reverse of happy?

Certainly.

Then the just is happy, and the unjust miserable?

So be it.

But happiness and not misery is profitable?

Of course.

Then, my blessed Thrasymachus, injustice can never be more profitable than justice.

Let this, Socrates, be your entertainment at the Bendidea.

BOOK IV. THE CARDINAL VIRTUES

SOCRATES ADEIMANTUS GLAUCON

Steph. 427

But where, amid all this, is justice? son of Ariston, tell me where. Now that our city has been made habitable, light a candle and search, and get your brother and Polemarchus and the rest of our friends to help, and let us see whether we can discover where is justice and where is injustice, and in what they differ from one another, and which of them the man who would be happy should have for his portion, whether seen or unseen by gods and men.

Nonsense, said Glaucon; did you not promise to search yourself, saying that to desert justice in her need would be an impiety?

I do not deny that I said so; and as you remind me, I will be as good as my word; but you must join.

We will, he replied.

Well, then, I hope to make the discovery in this way: I mean to begin with the assumption that our State, if rightly ordered, is perfect.

That is most certain.

And being perfect, is therefore wise and valiant and temperate and just.

That is likewise clear.

And whichever of these qualities we find in the State, the one which is not found will be the residue?

Very good.

If there were four things, and we were searching for one of them, wherever it might be, the one sought for might be known to us from the first, and there would be no further trouble; or,

we might know the three first, and then the fourth would clearly be the one left.

Very true, he said.

And is not a similar method to be pursued about the virtues, which are also four in number?

Clearly.

First among the virtues found in the State, wisdom comes into view, and in this I detect a certain peculiarity.

What is that?

The State which we have been describing is said to be wise as being good in counsel?

Very true.

And good counsel is clearly a kind of knowledge, for not by ignorance, but by knowledge, do men counsel well?

Clearly.

And the kinds of knowledge in a State are many and diverse?

Of course.

There is the knowledge of the carpenter; but is that the sort of knowledge which gives a city the title of wise and good in counsel?

Certainly not; that would only give a city the reputation of skill in carpentering.

Then a city is not to be called wise because possessed of knowledge which counsels for the best about wooden implements?

Certainly not.

Nor by reason of a knowledge which advises about brazen implements, he said, nor as possessing any other similar knowledge?

Not by reason of any of them, he said.

Nor yet by reason of a knowledge which cultivates the earth; that would give the city the name of agricultural?

Yes.

Well, I said, and is there any knowledge in our recently-founded State among any of the citizens which advises, not about any particular thing in the State, but about the whole, and considers how a State can best deal with itself and with other States?

There certainly is.

And what is this knowledge, and among whom is it found? I asked.

It is the knowledge of the guardians, he replied, and is found among those whom we were just now describing as perfect guardians.

And what is the name which the city derives from the possession of this sort of knowledge?

The name of good in counsel and truly wise.

And will there be more of these true guardians or more smiths?

The smiths, he replied, will be far more numerous.

Will not the guardians be the smallest of all the classes who receive a name from the profession of some kind of knowledge?

Much the smallest.

And so by reason of this smallest part or class, and of the knowledge which resides in this presiding and ruling part of itself, the whole State, being thus naturally constituted, will be wise; and this, which has the only knowledge worthy to be called wisdom, has been ordained by nature to be of all classes the least.

Most true.

Thus, then, I said, the nature and place in the State of one of the four virtues has somehow or other been discovered.

And, in my humble opinion, very satisfactorily discovered, he replied.

Again, I said, there is no difficulty in seeing the nature of courage, and in what part that quality resides which gives the name of courageous to the State.

How do you mean?

Why, I said, every one who calls any State courageous or cowardly, will be thinking of the part which fights and goes out to battle on the State's behalf.

No one, he replied, would ever think of any other.

The rest of the citizens may be courageous or may be cowardly, but their courage or cowardice will not, as I conceive, have the effect of making the city either the one or the other.

Certainly not.

The city will be courageous in virtue of a portion of herself which preserves under all circumstances that opinion about things

to be feared and not to be feared in which our legislature educated them; and this is what you term courage.

I should like to hear what you are saying once more, for I do not think that I perfectly understand you.

I mean that courage is a kind of salvation.

Salvation of what?

Of the opinion respecting things to be feared, of what they are, and of what nature, which the law implants through education; and I mean by the words "under all circumstances" to intimate that in pleasure or in pain, or under the influence of desire or fear, a man preserves, and does not lose this opinion. Shall I give you an illustration?

If you please.

You know, I said, that the dyers, when they want to dye wool for making the true sea-purple, begin by selecting their white colour first; this they prepare and dress with much care and pains, in order that the white ground may take the purple hue in full perfection. The dyeing then proceeds; and whatever is dyed in this manner becomes a fast colour, and no washing either with lyes or without them can take away the bloom. But when the ground has not been duly prepared you will have noticed how poor is the look either of purple or of any other colour?

Yes, he said; I know that they have a washed-out and ridiculous appearance.

Then now, I said, you will understand what our object was in selecting our soldiers, and educating them in music and gymnastic; we were contriving influences which would prepare them to take the dye of the laws in perfection, and the colour of their opinion about dangers and of every other opinion was to be indelibly fixed by their nurture and training, and not to be washed away by such potent lyes as pleasure — mightier agent far in washing the soul than any soda or lye; or by sorrow, fear, and desire, which are the mightiest of all other solvents. And this sort of universal saving power of true opinion in conformity with law about real and false dangers, I call and maintain to be courage, unless you disagree.

But I agree, he replied; for I suppose that you mean to exclude

mere uninstructed courage, such as that of a wild beast or of a slave — this, in your opinion, is not the courage which the law ordains, and ought to have another name.

Most certainly.

Then I may infer courage to be such as you describe?

Why, yes, said I, you may, and if you add the words "of a citizen," you will not be far wrong; — hereafter, if you like, we will carry the examination further, but at present we are seeking not for courage but justice; and for the purpose of our enquiry we have said enough.

You are right, he replied.

Two virtues remain to be discovered in the State — first, temperance, and then justice, which is the great object of our search.

Very true.

Now, can we find justice without troubling ourselves about temperance?

I do not know how that can be accomplished, he said, nor do I desire that justice should be brought to light and temperance lost sight of; and therefore I wish that you would do me the favour of considering temperance first.

Certainly, I replied, I should not be justified in refusing your request.

Then consider, he said.

Yes, I replied; I will; and as far as I can at present see, the virtue of temperance has more of the nature of harmony and symphony than the preceding.

How so? he asked.

Temperance, I replied, is the ordering or controlling of certain pleasures and desires; this is curiously enough implied in the saying of "a man being his own master;" and other traces of the same notion may be found in language.

No doubt, he said.

There is something ridiculous in the expression "master of himself;" for the master is also the servant and the servant the master; and in all these modes of speaking the same person is denoted.

Certainly.

The meaning is, I believe, that the human soul has a better principle, and has also a worse principle; and when the better has the worse under control, then a man is said to be master of himself; and this is a term of praise: but when, owing to evil education or association, the better principle, which is also the smaller, is overwhelmed by the greater mass of the worse; in this case he is blamed and is called the slave of self and unprincipled.

Yes, there is reason in that.

And now, I said, look at our newly-created State, and there you will find one of these two conditions realized; for the State, as you will acknowledge, may be justly called master of itself, if the words "temperance" and "self-mastery" truly express the rule of the better part over the worse.

Yes, he said, I see what you say is true.

Let me further note that the manifold and complex pleasures and desires and pains are generally found in children and women and servants, and in the freemen, so called, who are of the lowest and more numerous class.

Certainly, he said.

Whereas the simple and moderate desires which follow reason, and are under the guidance of mind and true opinion, are to be found only in a few, and those the best born and best educated.

Very true.

These two, as you may perceive, have a place in our State, but the meaner desires of the many are held down by the virtuous desires and wisdom of the few.

That I perceive, he said.

Then if there be any city which may be described as master of its own pleasures and desires, and master of itself, ours may claim such a designation?

Certainly, he replied.

It may also be called temperate, and for the same reasons?

Yes.

And if there be any State in which rulers and subjects will be agreed about the question who are to rule, that again will be our State?

Undoubtedly.

And the citizens being thus agreed among themselves, in which class will temperance be found — in the rulers or in the subjects?

In both, as I should imagine, he replied.

Do you observe that we were not far wrong in our guess that temperance was a sort of harmony?

Why so?

Why, because temperance is unlike courage and wisdom, each of which resides in a part only, the one making the State wise and the other valiant; not so temperance, which extends to the whole, and runs through the notes of the scale, and produces a harmony of the weaker and the stronger and the middle class, whether you suppose them to be stronger or weaker in wisdom or power or numbers or wealth, or anything else. Most truly then may we deem temperance to be the agreement of the naturally superior and inferior, as to the right rule of either, both in states and individuals.

I entirely agree with you.

And so, I said, we may consider three of the virtues to have been discovered in our State. The last of those qualities which make a state virtuous must be justice, if we only knew what that was.

The inference is obvious.

The time then has arrived, Glaucon, when, like huntsmen, we should surround the cover, and look sharp that justice does not steal away, and pass out of sight, and escape us; for beyond a doubt she is somewhere in this country: watch therefore and strive to catch a sight of her, and if you see her first, let me know.

Would that I could! But you should regard me rather as a follower who has just eyes enough to see what you show him — that is about as much as I am good for.

Offer up a prayer with me and follow.

I will, but you must show me the way.

Here is no path, I said, and the wood is dark and perplexing; still we must push on.

Let us push on.

Here I saw something: Halloo! I said, I begin to perceive a track, and I believe that the quarry will not escape.

Good news, he said.

Truly, I said, we are stupid fellows.

Why so?

Why, my good sir, at the beginning of our enquiry, ages ago, there was justice tumbling about at our feet, and we never saw her; nothing could be more ridiculous. Like people who go about looking for what they have in their hands — that was the way with us — we looked not at what we were seeking, but what was far off in the distance, and therefore, I suppose, we missed her.

What do you mean?

I mean to say that in reality for a long time past we have been talking of justice, and have failed to recognize her.

I grow impatient at the length of your exordium.

Well then, tell me, I said, whether I am right or not: You remember the original principle which we were always laying down at the foundation of the State, that one man should practise one thing only, the thing to which his nature was best adapted;— now justice is this principle or a part of it.

Yes, we often said that one man should do one thing only.

Further, we affirmed that justice was doing one's own business, and not being a busybody; we said so again and again, and many others have said the same to us.

Yes, we said so.

Then to do one's own business in a certain way may be assumed to be justice. Can you tell me whence I derive this inference?

I cannot, but I should like to be told.

Because I think that this is the only virtue which remains in the State when the other virtues of temperance and courage and wisdom are abstracted; and that this is the ultimate cause and condition of the existence of all of them, and while remaining in them is also their preservative; and we were saying that if the three were discovered by us, justice would be the fourth or remaining one.

That follows of necessity.

If we were asked to determine which of these four qualities by its presence contributes most to the excellence of the State,

whether the agreement of rulers and subjects, or the preservation in the soldiers of the opinion which the law ordains about the true nature of dangers, or wisdom and watchfulness in the rulers, or whether this other which I am mentioning, and which is found in children and women, slave and freemen, artisan, ruler, subject, — the quality, I mean, of every one doing his own work, and not being a busybody, — would claim the palm, the question is not so easily answered.

Certainly, he replied, there would be difficulty in saying which.

Then the power of each individual in the State to do his own work appears to compete with the other political virtues, wisdom, temperance, courage?

Yes, he said.

And the virtue which enters into this competition is justice?

Exactly.

Let us look at the question from another point of view: Are not the rulers in a State those to whom you would entrust the office of determining suits at law?

Certainly.

And are suits decided on any other ground but that a man may neither take what is another's, nor be deprived of what is his own?

Yes; that is their principle.

Which is a just principle?

Yes.

Then on this view also justice will be admitted to be the having and doing what is a man's own, and belongs to him?

Very true.

Think, now, and say whether you agree with me or not. Suppose a carpenter to be doing the business of a cobbler, or a cobbler of a carpenter; and suppose them to exchange their implements or their duties, or the same person to be doing the work of both; do you think that any great harm would result to the State?

Not much.

But when the cobbler or any other man whom nature designed to be a trader, having his heart lifted up by wealth or strength or the number of his followers, or any like advantage, attempts

to force his way into the class of warriors, or a warrior into that of legislators and guardians, for which he is unfitted, and either to take the implements or the duties of the other; or when one man is trader, legislator, and warrior all in one, then I think you will agree with me that this interchange and meddling of one with another is the ruin of the State.

Most true.

Seeing then, I said, that there are three distinct classes, any meddling of one with another, or the change of one into another, is the greatest harm to the State, and may be most justly termed evil-doing?

Precisely.

And the greatest degree of evil-doing to one's own city would be termed by you injustice?

Certainly.

This then is injustice; and on the other hand when the trader, the auxiliary, and the guardian each do their own business, that is justice, and will make the city just.

I agree with you.

We will not, I said, be over-positive as yet; but if, on trial, this conception of justice be verified in the individual as well as in the State, then there will be no longer any room for doubt; if it be not verified we must have a fresh enquiry. First let us complete the old investigation, which we began, as you remember, under the impression that, if we could previously examine justice on the larger scale, there would be less difficulty in discerning her in the individual. That larger example appeared to be the State, and accordingly we constructed one, as good a one as we could, knowing well that in the good State justice would be found. Let the discovery which we made be now applied to the individual — if they agree, we shall be satisfied; or, if there be a difference in the individual, we will come back to the State and have another trial of the theory. The friction of the two when rubbed together may possibly strike a light in which justice will shine forth, and the vision which is then revealed we will fix in our souls.

That will be in regular course; and let us do as you say.

I proceeded to ask: When two things, a greater and less, are called by the same name, are they like or unlike in so far as they are called the same?

Like, he replied.

The just man then, if we regard the idea of justice only, will be like the just State?

He will.

And a State was thought by us to be just when the three classes in the State severally did their own business; and also thought to be temperate and valiant and wise by reason of certain other affections and qualities of these same classes?

True, he said.

And so of the individual; we may assume that he has the same three principles in his own soul, which are found in the State; and he may be rightly described in the same terms, because he is affected in the same manner?

Certainly, he said.

Once more then, O my friend, we have alighted upon an easy question — whether the soul has these three principles or not?

An easy question! Nay, rather, Socrates, the proverb holds that hard is the good.

Very true, I said; and I do not think that the method which we are employing is at all adequate to the accurate solution of this question; the true method is another and a longer one. Still we may arrive at a solution not below the level of the previous enquiry.

May we not be satisfied with that? he said; — under the circumstances, I am quite content.

I too, I replied, shall be extremely well satisfied.

Then faint not in pursuing the speculation, he said.

Must we not acknowledge, I said, that in each of us there are the same principles and habits which there are in the State; and that from the individual they pass into the State? — how else can they come there? Take the quality of passion or spirit; — it would be ridiculous to imagine that this quality, when found in States, is not derived from the individuals who are supposed to possess it, e. g. the Thracians, Scythians, and in general the

northern nations; and the same may be said of the love of knowledge, which is the special characteristic of our part of the world, or the love of money, which may, with equal truth, be attributed to the Phœnicians and Egyptians.

Exactly so, he said.

There is no difficulty in understanding this.

None whatever.

. . . . . .

And so, after much tossing, we have reached land, and are fairly agreed that the same principles which exist in the State, exist in the individual, and that they are three in number.

Exactly.

Must we not then infer that the individual is wise in the same way, and in virtue of the same quality which makes the State wise?

Certainly.

And that the same quality which constitutes courage in the State constitutes courage in the individual, that both the State and the individual bear the same relation to all the other virtues?

Assuredly.

And the individual will be acknowledged by us to be just in the same way that the State is just?

That follows of course.

We cannot but remember that the justice of the State consisted in each of the three classes doing the work of its own class?

We are not very likely to have forgotten, he said.

We must recollect that the individual in whom the several qualities of his nature do their own work will be just, and will do his own work?

Yes, he said, we must remember that too.

And ought not the rational principle, which is wise, and has the care of the whole soul, to rule, and the passionate or spirited principle to be the subject and ally?

Certainly.

And, as we were saying, the united influence of music and gymnastic will bring them into accord, nerving and sustaining the reason with noble words and lessons, and moderating and

soothing and civilizing the wildness of passion, by harmony and rhythm?

Quite true, he said.

And these two, thus nurtured and educated, and having learned truly to know their own functions, will rule over the concupiscent, which in each of us is the largest part of the soul and by nature most insatiable of gain; over this they will keep guard, lest, waxing great with the fulness of bodily pleasures, as they are termed, the concupiscent soul no longer confined to her own sphere, should attempt to enslave and rule those who are not her natural-born subjects, and overturn the whole life of man?

Very true, he said.

Both together will they not be the best defenders of the whole soul and the whole body against attacks from without; the one counselling, and the other fighting under his leader, and courageously executing his commands and counsels.

True.

And he is to be deemed courageous whose spirit retains fast in pleasure and in pain the commands of reason about what he ought or ought not to fear?

Right, he replied.

And him we call wise who has in him that little part which rules, and which proclaims these commands; that part too being supposed to have a knowledge of what is for the interest of each of the three parts and of the whole?

Assuredly.

And would you not say that he is temperate who has these same elements in friendly harmony, in whom the one ruling principle of reason and the two subject ones of spirit and desire are equally agreed that reason ought to rule, and do not rebel?

Certainly, he said, that is the true account of temperance whether in the State or individual.

And surely, I said, we have explained again and again how and by virtue of what quality a man will be just.

That is very certain.

And is justice dimmer in the individual, and is her form different, or is she the same which we found in the State?

There is no difference in my opinion, he said.

Because, if any doubt is still lingering in our minds, a few commonplace instances will satisfy us of the truth of what I am saying.

What sort of instances do you mean?

If the case is put to us, must we not admit that the just State, or the man who is trained in the principles of such a State, will be less likely than the unjust to make away with a deposit of gold or silver? Would any one deny this?

No one, he replied.

Will the just man or citizen ever be guilty of sacrilege or theft, or treachery either to his friends or to his country?

That will be far from him.

Neither will he ever break faith where there have been oaths or agreements?

Impossible.

No one will be less likely to commit adultery, or to dishonour his father and mother, or to fail in his religious duties?

No one.

And the reason is that each part of him is doing its own business, whether in ruling or being ruled?

Very true.

Are you satisfied then that the quality which makes such men and such States is justice, or do you hope to discover some other?

Not I, indeed.

Then our dream has been realized; and the suspicion that we entertained at the beginning of our work of construction, that some divine power must have conducted us to a primary form of justice — that suspicion of ours has been now verified?

And the division of labour which required the carpenter and the shoemaker and the rest of the citizens to be doing each his own business, and not another's, was a shadow of justice, and for that reason it was of use?

Clearly.

But in reality justice was such as we were describing, being concerned not with the outward man, but with the inward, which is the true self and concernment of man: for the just man does

not permit the several elements within him to interfere with one another, or any of them to do the work of others, — but he sets in order his own inner life, and is his own master, and his own law, and at peace with himself; and when he has bound together the three principles within him, which may be compared to the higher, lower, and middle notes of the scale, and the intermediate intervals — when he has bound all these together, and is no longer many, but has become one entirely temperate and perfectly adjusted nature, then he proceeds to act, if he has to act, whether in a matter of property, or in the treatment of the body, or in some affair of politics or private business; always thinking and calling that which preserves and coöperates with this harmonious condition, just and good action, and the knowledge which presides over it, wisdom, and that which at any time impairs this condition, he will call unjust action, and the opinion which presides over it ignorance.

You have said the exact truth, Socrates.

Very good; and if we were to affirm that we had discovered the just man and the just State, and the place of justice in each of them, we should not be telling a falsehood?

Most certainly not.

. . . . . .

BOOK VI. THE IDEA OF THE GOOD

SOCRATES GLAUCON

Steph. 504

You may remember, I said, that we divided the soul into three parts; and distinguished the several natures of justice, temperance, courage, and wisdom?

Indeed, he said, if I had forgotten that, I should not deserve to hear more.

And do you remember the word of caution which preceded the discussion of them?

To what do you refer?

We were saying, if I am not mistaken, that he who wanted to see them in their perfect beauty must take a longer and more

circuitous way, at the end of which they would appear; but that we could add on a popular exposition of them on a level with the discussion which had preceded. And you replied that such an exposition would be enough for you, and so the enquiry was continued in what appeared to me to be a very inaccurate manner; whether you were satisfied or not is for you to say.

Yes, he said, I thought and the others thought that you gave us a fair measure of truth.

But, my friend, I said, a measure of such things which in any degree falls short of the truth is not fair measure; for nothing imperfect is the measure of anything, although persons are too apt to be contented and think that they need search no further.

Not an uncommon case when people are indolent.

Yes, I said; and there cannot be any worse fault in a guardian of the State and of the laws.

True.

The guardian then, I said, must be required to take the longer circuit, and toil at learning as well as at gymnastics, or he will never reach the highest knowledge of all, which, as we were just now saying, is his proper calling.

What, he said, is there a knowledge still higher than this — higher than justice and the other virtues?

Yes, I said, there is. And of these too we must behold not the outline merely, as at present — nothing short of the most finished work should satisfy us. When little things are elaborated with an infinity of pains, in order that they may appear in their full beauty and utmost clearness, how ridiculous that we should not think the highest truths worthy of attaining the greatest exactness!

A right noble thought; but do you suppose that we shall refrain from asking you what is the highest knowledge?

Nay, I said, ask if you will; but I am certain that you have heard the answer many times, and now you either do not understand me or you mean to be troublesome; for you have often been told that the idea of good is the highest knowledge, and that all other things become useful and advantageous only by their use of this. You can hardly be ignorant that of this I

was about to speak, concerning which, as you have often heard me say, we know so little; and, without which, any other knowledge or possession of any kind will profit us nothing. Do you think that the possession of all other things is of any value if we do not possess the good? or the knowledge of all other things if we have no knowledge of beauty and goodness?

Assuredly not.

You are further aware that most people affirm pleasure to be the good, but the finer sort of wits say it is knowledge?

Yes.

And you are aware too that the latter cannot explain what they mean by knowledge, but are obliged after all to say knowledge of the good?

How ridiculous!

Yes, I said, that they should begin by reproaching us with our ignorance of the good, and then presume our knowledge of it — for good they define to be the knowledge of the good, just as if we understood them when they used the term "good" — this is of course ridiculous.

Most true, he said.

And those who make pleasure their good are in equal perplexity; for they are compelled to admit that there are bad pleasures as well as good.

Certainly.

And therefore to acknowledge that bad and good are the same?

True.

There can be no doubt about the numerous difficulties in which this question is involved.

There can be none.

Further, do we not see that many are willing to do or to have or to seem to be the just and honourable without the reality; but no one is satisfied with the appearance of good — the reality is what they seek; in the case of the good, appearance is despised by every one.

Very true, he said.

Of this then, which every soul of man pursues and makes the end of all his actions, having a presentiment that there is such an

end, and yet hesitating because neither knowing the nature nor having the same assurance of this as of other things, and therefore losing whatever good there is in other things, — of a principle such and so great as this ought the best men in our State, to whom everything is entrusted, to be in the darkness of ignorance?

Certainly not, he said.

I am sure, I said, that he who does not know how the beautiful and the just are likewise good will be but a sorry guardian of them; and I suspect that no one who is ignorant of the good will have a true knowledge of them.

That, he said, is a shrewd suspicion of yours.

And if we only have a guardian who has this knowledge our State will be perfectly ordered?

Of course, he replied; but I wish that you would tell me whether you conceive this supreme principle of the good to be knowledge or pleasure, or different from either?

Aye, I said, I knew quite well that a fastidious gentleman like you would not be contented with the thoughts of other people about these matters.

True, Socrates; but I must say that one who like you has passed a lifetime in the study of philosophy should not be always repeating the opinions of others, and never telling his own.

Well, but has any one a right to say positively what he does not know?

Not, he said, with the assurance of positive certainty; he has no right to do that: but he may say what he thinks, as a matter of opinion.

And do you not know, I said, that all mere opinions are bad, and the best of them blind? You would not deny that those who have any true notion without intelligence are only like blind men who find their way along the road?

Very true.

And do you wish to behold what is blind and crooked and base, when others will tell you of brightness and beauty?

Still, I must implore you, Socrates, said Glaucon, not to turn away just as you are reaching the goal; if you will only give

such an explanation of the good as you have already given of justice and temperance and the other virtues, we shall be satisfied.

Yes, my friend, and I shall be at least equally satisfied, but I cannot help fearing that I shall fail, and that my indiscreet zeal will bring ridicule upon me. No, sweet sirs, let us not at present ask what is the actual nature of the good, for to reach what is now in my thoughts would be an effort too great for me. But of the child of the good who is likest him, I would fain speak, if I could be sure that you wished to hear — otherwise, not.

By all means, he said, tell us about the child, and you shall remain in our debt for an account of the parent.

I do indeed wish, I replied, that I could pay, and you receive, an account of the parent, and not, as now, of the offspring only; take, however, this by way of interest,[1] and at the same time have a care that I do not render a false account, although I have no intention of deceiving you.

Yes, we will take all the care that we can: proceed.

Yes, I said, but I must first come to an understanding with you, and remind you of what I have mentioned in the course of this discussion, and at many other times.

What?

The old story, that there is a many beautiful and a many good, and so of other things which we describe and define; to all of them the term "many" is applied.

True, he said.

And there is an absolute beauty and an absolute good, and of other things to which the term "many" is applied there is an absolute; for they may be brought under a single idea, which is called the essence of each.

Very true.

The many, as we say, are seen but not known, and the ideas are known but not seen.

Exactly.

And what is the organ with which we see the visible things?

The sight, he said.

[1] A play upon *τόκος*, which means both "offspring" and "interest."

And with the hearing, I said, we hear, and with the other senses perceive the other objects of sense?

True.

But have you remarked that sight is by far the most costly and complex piece of workmanship which the artificer of the senses ever contrived?

No, I never have, he said.

Then reflect: has the ear or voice need of any third or additional nature in order that the one may be able to hear and the other to be heard?

Nothing of the sort.

No, indeed, I replied; and the same is true of most, if not all, the other senses — you would not say that any of them requires such an addition?

Indeed not.

But you see that without the addition there is no seeing or being seen?

How do you mean?

Sight being, as I conceive, in the eyes, and he who has eyes wanting to see; colour being also present in them, still unless there be a third nature specially adapted to the purpose, the owner of the eyes will see nothing and the colours will be invisible.

Of what nature are you speaking?

Of that which you term light, I replied.

True, he said.

Noble, then, is the bond which links together sight and visibility, and great beyond other bonds by no small difference of nature; for light is their bond, and light is no ignoble thing?

Nay, he said, the reverse of ignoble.

And which, I said, of the gods in heaven would you say was the lord of this element? Whose is that light which makes the eye to see perfectly and the visible to appear?

You mean the sun, as you and all mankind say.

May not the relation of sight to this deity be described as follows?

How?

Neither sight nor the eye in which sight resides is the sun?

No.

Yet of all the organs of sense the eye is the most like the sun?

By far the most like.

And the power which the eye possesses is a sort of effluence which is dispensed from the sun?

Exactly.

Then the sun is not sight, but the author of sight who is recognized by sight?

True, he said.

And this is he whom I call the child of the good, whom the good begat in his own likeness, to be in the visible world, in relation to sight and the things of sight, what the good is in the intellectual world in relation to mind and the things of mind.

Will you be a little more explicit? he said.

Why, you know, I said, that the eyes, when a person directs them towards objects on which the light of day is no longer shining, but the moon and stars only, see dimly, and are nearly blind; they seem to have no clearness of vision in them?

Very true.

But when they are directed towards objects on which the sun shines, they see clearly and there is sight in them?

Certainly.

And the soul is like the eye: when resting upon that on which truth and being shine, the soul perceives and understands, and is radiant with intelligence; but when turned towards the twilight of becoming and perishing, then she has opinion only, and goes blinking about, and is first of one opinion and then of another, and seems to have no intelligence?

Just so.

Now, that which imparts truth to the known and the power of knowing to the knower is what I would have you term the idea of good, and this you will deem to be the cause of science and of truth, in so far as the latter becomes the subject of knowledge; beautiful too, as are both truth and knowledge, you will be right in esteeming this other nature as more beautiful than either; and as, in the previous instance, light and sight may be truly said to be like the sun, and yet not to be the sun, so in this other sphere,

science and truth may be deemed like the good, but not the good; the good has a place of honour yet higher.

What a wonder of beauty that must be, he said, which is the author of science and truth, and yet surpasses them in beauty; for you surely cannot mean to say that pleasure is the good?

God forbid, I replied; but may I ask you to consider the image in another point of view?

In what point of view?

You would say, would you not, that the sun is not only the author of visibility in all visible things, but of generation and nourishment and growth, though he himself is not generation?

Certainly.

In like manner the good* may be said to be not only the author of knowledge to all things known, but of their being and essence, and yet the good is not essence, but far exceeds essence in dignity and power.

* The elements of this supreme good are summarized by Plato in one of his latest works, the *Philebus*, as follows: —

[*Steph.* 66 A] *Soc.* Then, Protarchus, you will proclaim everywhere, by word of mouth to this company, and by messengers bearing the tidings far, that pleasure is not the first of possessions, nor yet the second, but that in measure, and the mean, and the suitable, and the like the eternal nature has been found.

Pro. Yes, that seems to be the result of what has now been said.

Soc. In the second class is contained the symmetrical and beautiful and perfect or sufficient, and all which are of that family.

Pro. True.

Soc. And if you reckon in the third class mind and wisdom, you will not be far wrong, if I divine aright.

Pro. I dare say.

Soc. And would you not put in the fourth class the goods which we were affirming to appertain especially to the soul — sciences and arts and true opinions as we call them? These come after the third class, and form the fourth, as they are certainly more akin to good than pleasure is.

Pro. Surely.

Soc. The fifth class are the pleasures which were defined by us as painless, being the pure pleasures of the soul herself, as we termed them, which accompany, some the sciences, some the senses.

Pro. Perhaps.

Soc. And now, as Orpheus says, —

With the sixth generation cease the glory of my song.

Here, at the sixth award, let us make an end.

BOOK VII. THE ALLEGORY OF THE CAVE

SOCRATES GLAUCON

Steph. 514

And now, I said, let me show in a figure how far our nature is enlightened or unenlightened: Behold! human beings living in an underground den, which has a mouth open towards the light and reaching all along the den; they have been here from their childhood, and have their legs and necks chained so that they cannot move, and can only see before them; for the chains are arranged in such a manner as to prevent them from turning round their heads. Above and behind them the light of a fire is blazing at a distance, and between the fire and the prisoners there is a raised way; and you will see, if you look, a low wall built along the way, like the screen which marionette players have in front of them, over which they show the puppets.

I see.

And do you see, I said, men passing along the wall, carrying all sorts of vessels, and statues and figures of animals made of wood and stone and various materials, which appear over the wall? Some of them are talking, others silent.

You have shown me a strange image, and they are strange prisoners.

Like ourselves, I replied; and they see only their own shadows, or the shadows of one another, which the fire throws on the opposite wall of the cave?

True, he said; how could they see anything but the shadows if they were never allowed to move their heads?

And of the objects which are being carried in like manner they would only see the shadows?

Yes, he said.

And if they were able to converse with one another, would they not suppose that they were naming what was actually before them?

Very true.

And suppose further that the prison had an echo which came

from the other side, would they not be sure to fancy when one of the passers-by spoke that the voice which they heard came from the passing shadow?

No question, he replied.

To them, I said, the truth would be literally nothing but the shadows of the images.

That is certain.

And now look again, and see what will naturally follow if the prisoners are released and disabused of their error. At first, when any one of them is liberated and compelled suddenly to stand up and turn his neck round and walk and look towards the light, he will suffer sharp pains; the glare will distress him, and he will be unable to see the realities of which in his former state he had seen the shadows; and then conceive some one saying to him, that what he saw before was an illusion, but that now when he is approaching nearer to being and his eye is turned towards more real existence, he has a clearer vision, — what will be his reply? And you may further imagine that his instructor is pointing to the objects as they pass and requiring him to name them, — will he not be perplexed? Will he not fancy that the shadows which he formerly saw are truer than the objects which are now shown to him?

Far truer.

And if he is compelled to look straight at the light, will he not have a pain in his eyes which will make him turn away to take refuge in the objects of vision which he can see, and which he will conceive to be in reality clearer than the things which are now being shown to him?

True, he said.

And suppose once more, that he is reluctantly dragged up a steep and rugged ascent, and held fast until he is forced into the presence of the sun himself, is he not likely to be pained and irritated? When he approaches the light his eyes will be dazzled, and he will not be able to see anything at all of what are now called realities.

Not all in a moment, he said.

He will require to grow accustomed to the sight of the upper

world. And first he will see the shadows best, next the reflections of men and other objects in the water, and then the objects themselves; then he will gaze upon the light of the moon and the stars and the spangled heaven; and he will see the sky and the stars by night better than the sun or the light of the sun by day?

Certainly.

Last of all he will be able to see the sun, and not mere reflections of him in the water, but he will see him as he is in his own proper place, and not in another; and he will contemplate him as he is.

Certainly.

He will proceed to argue that this sun is he who gives the seasons and the years, and is the guardian of all that is in the visible world, and in a certain way the cause of all things which he and his fellows have been accustomed to behold?

Clearly, he said, he would first see the sun and then reason about him.

And when he remembered his old habitation, and the wisdom of the den and his fellow-prisoners, do you not suppose that he would felicitate himself on the change, and pity them?

Certainly, he would.

And if they were in the habit of conferring honours among themselves on those who were quickest to observe the passing shadows and to remark which of them went before, and which followed after, and which were together; and who were therefore best able to draw conclusions as to the future, do you think that he would care for such honours and glories, or envy the possessors of them? Would he not say with Homer,

> Better to be the poor servant of a poor master,

and to endure anything, rather than to think as they do and live after their manner?

Yes, he said, I think that he would rather suffer anything than entertain these false notions and live in this miserable manner.

Imagine once more, I said, such an one coming suddenly out of the sun to be replaced in his old situation; would he not be certain to have his eyes full of darkness?

To be sure, he said.

And if there were a contest, and he had to compete in measuring the shadows with the prisoners who had never moved out of the den, while his sight was still weak, and before his eyes had become steady (and the time which would be needed to acquire this new habit of sight might be very considerable), would he not be ridiculous? Men would say of him that up he went and down he came without his eyes; and that it was better not even to think of ascending; and if any one tried to loose another and lead him up to the light, let them only catch the offender, and they would put him to death.

No question, he said.

This entire allegory, I said, you may now append, dear Glaucon, to the previous argument; the prison-house is the world of sight, the light of the fire is the sun, and you will not misapprehend me if you interpret the journey upward to be the ascent of the soul into the intellectual world according to my poor belief, which, at your desire, I have expressed—whether rightly or wrongly God knows. But, whether true or false, my opinion is that in the world of knowledge the idea of good appears last of all, and is seen only with an effort; and, when seen, is also inferred to be the universal author of all things beautiful and right, parent of light and of the lord of light in this world, and the source of truth and reason in the intellectual; and that this thing is the power upon which he who would act rationally either in public or private life must have his eye fixed.

I agree, he said, as far as I am able to understand you.

Moreover, I said, you must not wonder that those who attain to this beatific vision are unwilling to descend to human affairs; for their souls are ever hastening into the upper world where they desire to dwell; which desire of theirs is very natural, if our allegory may be trusted.

Yes, very natural.

And is there anything surprising in one who passes from divine contemplations to the evil state of man, misbehaving himself in a ridiculous manner; if, while his eyes are blinking and before he has become accustomed to the surrounding darkness, he is

compelled to fight in courts of law, or in other places, about the images or shadows of images of justice, and is endeavouring to meet the conceptions of those who have never yet seen absolute justice?

Anything but surprising, he replied.

Any one who has common sense will remember that the bewilderments of the eyes are of two kinds, and arise from two causes, either from coming out of the light or from going into the light, which is true of the mind's eye, quite as much as of the bodily eye; and he who remembers this when he sees any one whose vision is perplexed and weak, will not be too ready to laugh; he will first ask whether that soul of man has come out of the brighter life, and is unable to see because unaccustomed to the dark, or having turned from darkness to the day is dazzled by excess of light. And he will count the one happy in his condition and state of being, and he will pity the other; or, if he have a mind to laugh at the soul which comes from below into the light, there will be more reason in this than in the laugh which greets him who returns out of the light into the den.

That, he said, is a very just distinction.

But then, if I am right, certain professors of education must be wrong when they say that they can put a knowledge into the soul which was not there before, like sight into blind eyes.

They undoubtedly say this, he replied.

Whereas, our argument shows that the power and capacity of learning exists in the soul already; and that just as the eye was unable to turn from darkness to light without the whole body, so too the instrument of knowledge can only by the movement of the whole soul be turned round from the world of becoming into that of being, and learn by degrees to endure the sight of being, and of the brightest and best of being, or in other words, of the good.

Very true.

And must there not be some art which will effect conversion in the easiest and quickest manner; not implanting the faculty of sight, for that exists already, but has been turned in the wrong direction, and is looking away from the truth?

Yes, he said, such an art may be presumed.

And whereas the other so-called virtues seem to be akin to the bodily qualities, for even when they are not originally innate they can be implanted later by habit and exercise, the virtue of wisdom more than anything else contains a divine element which always remains, and by this conversion is rendered useful and profitable; or, on the other hand, hurtful and useless. Did you never observe the narrow intelligence flashing from the keen eye of a clever rogue — how eager he is, how clearly his paltry soul sees the way to his end; he is the reverse of blind, but his keen eye-sight is forced into the service of evil, and he is mischievous in proportion to his cleverness?

Very true, he said.

But what if there had been a circumcision of such natures in the days of their youth; and they had been severed from those sensual pleasures, such as eating and drinking, which like leaden weights were attached to them at their birth, and which drag them down and turn the vision of their souls upon the things that are below — if, I say, they had been released from these impediments and turned in the opposite direction, the very same faculty in them would have seen the truth as keenly as they see what their eyes are turned to now.

Very likely.

Yes, I said; and there is another thing which is likely, or rather a necessary inference from what has preceded, that neither the uneducated and uninformed of the truth, nor yet those who never make an end of their education will be able ministers of State; not the former, because they have no single aim of duty which is the rule of all their actions, private as well as public; nor the latter, because they will not act at all except upon compulsion, fancying that they are already dwelling apart in the islands of the blest.

Very true, he replied.

Then, I said, the business of us who are the founders of the State will be to compel the best minds to attain that knowledge which has been already declared by us to be the greatest of all — they must continue to ascend until they arrive at the good;

but when they have ascended and seen enough we must not allow them to do as they do now.

What do you mean?

I mean that they remain in the upper world: but this must not be allowed; they must be made to descend again among the prisoners in the den, and partake of their labours and honours, whether they are worth having or not.

But is not this unjust? he said; ought we to give them an inferior life, when they might have a superior one?

You have again forgotten, my friend, I said, the intention of the legislator, who did not aim at making any one class in the State happy above the rest; the happiness was to be in the whole State, and he held the citizens together by persuasion and necessity, making them benefactors of the State, and therefore benefactors of one another; to this end he created them, not that they should please themselves, but they were to be his instruments in binding up the State.

True, he said, I had forgotten.

Observe, Glaucon, that there will be no injustice in compelling our philosophers to have a care and providence of others; we shall explain to them that in other States, men of their class are not obliged to share in the toils of politics: and this is reasonable, for they grow up at their own sweet will, and the government would rather not have them. Being self-taught, they cannot be expected to show any gratitude for a culture which they never received. But we have brought you into the world to be rulers of the hive, kings of yourselves and of the other citizens, and have educated you far better and more perfectly than they have been educated, and you are better able to share in the double duty. Wherefore each of you, when his turn comes, must go down to the general underground abode, and get the habit of seeing in the dark; when you have acquired the habit you will see ten thousand times better than the inhabitants of the den, and you will know what the several images are, and what they represent, because you have seen the beautiful and just and good in their truth. And thus our State, which is also yours, will be a reality, and not a dream only, and will be administered in a spirit unlike

that of other States in which men fight with one another about shadows only and are distracted in the struggle for power, which in their eyes is a great good. Whereas the truth is that the State in which the rulers are most reluctant to govern is best and most quietly governed, and the State in which they are most eager, the worst.

Quite true, he replied.

And will our pupils, when they hear this, refuse to take their turn at the toils of State, when they are allowed to spend the greater part of their time with one another in the heavenly light?

Impossible, he answered; for they are just men, and the commands which we impose upon them are just; there can be no doubt that every one of them will take office as a stern necessity, and not after the fashion of our present rulers of State.

Yes, my friend, I said; and there lies the point. You must contrive for your future rulers another and a better life than that of a ruler, and then you may have a well-ordered State; for only in the State which offers this, will they rule who are truly rich, not in silver and gold, but in virtue and wisdom, which are the true blessings of life. Whereas if they go to the administration of public affairs, poor and hungering after their own private advantage, thinking that hence they are to snatch the good of life, order there can never be; for they will be fighting about office, and the civil and domestic broils which thus arise will be the ruin of the rulers themselves and of the whole State.

Most true, he replied.

And the only life which looks down upon the life of political ambition is that of true philosophy? Do you know of any other?

Indeed, I do not, he said.

ARISTOTLE

(384-324)

THE NICOMACHEAN ETHICS

Translated from the Greek by*
F. H. PETERS

BOOK I. THE GOOD OR THE END

1. EVERY art and every kind of inquiry, and likewise every act and purpose, seems to aim at some good: and so it has been well said that the good is that at which everything aims.

But a difference is observable among these aims or ends. What is aimed at is sometimes the exercise of a faculty, sometimes a certain result beyond that exercise. And where there is an end beyond the act, there the result is better than the exercise of the faculty.

Now since there are many kinds of actions and many arts and sciences, it follows that there are many ends also; *e. g.* health is the end of medicine, ships of shipbuilding, victory of the art of war, and wealth of economy.

But when several of these are subordinated to some one art or science, — as the making of bridles and other trappings to the art of horsemanship, and this in turn, along with all else that the soldier does, to the art of war, and so on, — then the end of the master-art is always more desired than the ends of the subordinate arts, since these are pursued for its sake. And this is equally true whether the end in view be the mere exercise of a faculty or something beyond that, as in the above instances.

2. If then in what we do there be some end which we wish for on its own account, choosing all the others as means to this, but not every end without exception as a means to something else (for so we should go on *ad infinitum*, and desire would be left void

* From Ἀριστοτέλους ἠθικῶν Νικομαχείων βιβλία δέκα. Reprinted from *The Nicomachean Ethics of Aristotle*, translated by F. H. Peters, London, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., Ltd., 1881; 9th ed., 1904.

and objectless), — this evidently will be the good or the best of all things. And surely from a practical point of view it much concerns us to know this good; for then, like archers shooting at a definite mark, we shall be more likely to attain what we want.

If this be so, we must try to indicate roughly what it is, and first of all to which of the arts or sciences it belongs.

It would seem to belong to the supreme art or science, that one which most of all deserves the name of master-art or master-science.

Now Politics[1] seems to answer to this description. For it prescribes which of the sciences a state needs, and which each man shall study, and up to what point; and to it we see subordinated even the highest arts, such as economy, rhetoric, and the art of war.

Since then it makes use of the other practical sciences, and since it further ordains what men are to do and from what to refrain, its end must include the ends of the others, and must be the proper good of man.

For though this good is the same for the individual and the state, yet the good of the state seems a grander and more perfect thing both to attain and to secure; and glad as one would be to do this service for a single individual, to do it for a people and for a number of states is nobler and more divine.

This then is the aim of the present inquiry, which is a sort of political inquiry.

4. Since — to resume — all knowledge and all purpose aims at some good, what is this which we say is the aim of Politics; or, in other words, what is the highest of all realizable goods?

As to its name, I suppose nearly all men are agreed; for the masses and the men of culture alike declare that it is happiness, and hold that to "live well" or to "do well" is the same as to be "happy."

But they differ as to what this happiness is, and the masses do not give the same account of it as the philosophers.

The former take it to be something palpable and plain, as

[1] To Aristotle Politics is a much wider term than to us ; it covers the whole field of human life, since man is essentially social.

pleasure or wealth or fame; one man holds it to be this, and another that, and often the same man is of different minds at different times, — after sickness it is health, and in poverty it is wealth; while when they are impressed with the consciousness of their ignorance, they admire most those who say grand things that are above their comprehension.

Some philosophers, on the other hand, have thought that, beside these several good things, there is an "absolute" good which is the cause of their goodness.

As it would hardly be worth while to review all the opinions that have been held, we will confine ourselves to those which are most popular, or which seem to have some foundation in reason.

But we must not omit to notice the distinction that is drawn between the method of proceeding from your starting-points or principles, and the method of working up to them. Plato used with fitness to raise this question, and to ask whether the right way is from or to your starting-points, as in the race-course you may run from the judges to the boundary, or *vice versa*.

Well, we must start from what is known.

But "what is known" may mean two things: "what is known to us," which is one thing, or "what is known" simply, which is another.

I think it is safe to say that *we* must start from what is known to *us*.

And on this account nothing but a good moral training can qualify a man to study what is noble and just — in a word, to study questions of Politics. For the undemonstrated fact is here the starting-point, and if this undemonstrated fact be sufficiently evident to a man, he will not require a "reason why." Now the man who has had a good moral training either has already arrived at starting-points or principles of action, or will easily accept them when pointed out. But he who neither has them nor will accept them may hear what Hesiod[1] says: —

> The best is he who of himself doth know;
> Good too is he who listens to the wise;
> But he who neither knows himself nor heeds
> The words of others, is a useless man.

[1] *Works and Days*, 291–295.

5. Let us now take up the discussion at the point from which we digressed.

It seems that men not unreasonably take their notions of the good or happiness from the lives actually led, and that the masses who are the least refined suppose it to be pleasure, which is the reason why they aim at nothing higher than the life of enjoyment.

For the most conspicuous kinds of life are three: this life of enjoyment, the life of the statesman, and, thirdly, the contemplative life.

The mass of men show themselves utterly slavish in their preference for the life of brute beasts, but their views receive consideration because many of those in high places have the tastes of Sardanapalus.

Men of refinement with a practical turn prefer honour; for I suppose we may say that honour is the aim of the statesman's life.

But this seems too superficial to be the good we are seeking: for it appears to depend upon those who give rather than upon those who receive it; while we have a presentiment that the good is something that is peculiarly a man's own and can scarce be taken away from him.

Moreover, these men seem to pursue honour in order that they may be assured of their own excellence, — at least, they wish to be honoured by men of sense, and by those who know them, and on the ground of their virtue or excellence. It is plain, then, that in their view, at any rate, virtue or excellence is better than honour; and perhaps we should take this to be the end of the statesman's life, rather than honour.

But virtue or excellence also appears too incomplete to be what we want; for it seems that a man might have virtue and yet be asleep or be inactive all his life, and, moreover, might meet with the greatest disasters and misfortunes; and no one would maintain that such a man is happy, except for argument's sake. But we will not dwell on these matters now, for they are sufficiently discussed in the popular treatises.

The third kind of life is the life of contemplation: we will treat of it further on.[1]

As for the money-making life, it is something quite contrary to nature; and wealth evidently is not the good of which we are in search, for it is merely useful as a means to something else. So we might rather take pleasure and virtue or excellence to be ends than wealth; for they are chosen on their own account. But it seems that not even they are the end, though much breath has been wasted in attempts to show that they are.

6. Dismissing these views, then, we have now to consider the "universal good," and to state the difficulties which it presents; though such an inquiry is not a pleasant task in view of our friendship for the authors of the doctrine of ideas. But we venture to think that this is the right course, and that in the interests of truth we ought to sacrifice even what is nearest to us, especially as we call ourselves philosophers. Both are dear to us, but it is a sacred duty to give the preference to truth.

In the first place, the authors of this theory themselves did not assert a common idea in the case of things of which one is prior to the other; and for this reason they did not hold one common idea of numbers. Now the predicate good is applied to substances and also to qualities and relations. But that which has independent existence, what we call "substance," is logically prior to that which is relative; for the latter is an offshoot as it were, or [in logical language] an accident of a thing or substance. So [by their own showing] there cannot be one common idea of these goods.

Secondly, the term good is used in as many different ways as the term "is" or "being:" we apply the term to substances or independent existences, as God, reason; to qualities, as the virtues; to quantity, as the moderate or due amount; to relatives, as the useful; to time, as opportunity; to place, as habitation, and so on. It is evident, therefore, that the word good cannot stand for one and the same notion in all these various applications; for if it did, the term could not be applied in all the categories, but in one only.

[1] Cf. VI. 7, 12 and X. 7, 8.

Thirdly, if the notion were one, since there is but one science of all the things that come under one idea, there would be but one science of all goods; but as it is, there are many sciences even of the goods that come under one category; as, for instance, the science which deals with opportunity in war is strategy, but in disease is medicine; and the science of the due amount in the matter of food is medicine, but in the matter of exercise is the science of gymnastic.

Fourthly, one might ask what they mean by the "absolute:" in "absolute man" and "man" the word "man" has one and the same sense; for in respect of manhood there will be no difference between them; and if so, neither will there be any difference in respect of goodness between "absolute good" and "good."

Fifthly, they do not make the good any more good by making it eternal; a white thing that lasts a long while is no whiter than what lasts but a day.

There seems to be more plausibility in the doctrine of the Pythagoreans, who [in their table of opposites] place the one on the same side with the good things [instead of reducing all goods to unity]; and even Speusippus [1] seems to follow them in this.

However, these points may be reserved for another occasion; but objection may be taken to what I have said on the ground that the Platonists do not speak in this way of all goods indiscriminately, but hold that those that are pursued and welcomed on their own account are called good by reference to one common form or type, while those things that tend to produce or preserve these goods, or to prevent their opposites, are called good only as means to these, and in a different sense.

It is evident that there will thus be two classes of goods: one good in themselves, the other good as means to the former. Let us separate then from the things that are merely useful those that are good in themselves, and inquire if they are called good by reference to one common idea or type.

Now what kind of things would one call "good in themselves"? Surely those things that we pursue even apart from their con-

[1] Plato's nephew and successor.

sequences, such as wisdom and sight and certain pleasures and certain honours; for although we sometimes pursue these things as means, no one could refuse to rank them among the things that are good in themselves.

If these be excluded, nothing is good in itself except the idea; and then the type or form will be meaningless.

If however, these are ranked among the things that are good in themselves, then it must be shown that the goodness of all of them can be defined in the same terms, as white has the same meaning when applied to snow and to white lead.

But, in fact, we have to give a separate and different account of the goodness of honour and wisdom and pleasure.

Good, then, is not a term that is applied to all these things alike in the same sense or with reference to one common idea or form.

But how then do these things come to be called good? for they do not appear to have received the same name by chance merely. Perhaps it is because they all proceed from one source, or all conduce to one end; or perhaps it is rather in virtue of some analogy, just as we call the reason the eye of the soul because it bears the same relation to the soul that the eye does to the body, and so on.

But we may dismiss these questions at present; for to discuss them in detail belongs more properly to another branch of philosophy.

And for the same reason we may dismiss the further consideration of the idea; for even granting that this term good, which is applied to all these different things, has one and the same meaning throughout, or that there is an absolute good apart from these particulars, it is evident that this good will not be anything that man can realize or attain: but it is a good of this kind that we are now seeking.

It might, perhaps, be thought that it would nevertheless be well to make ourselves acquainted with this universal good, with a view to the goods that are attainable and realizable. With this for a pattern, it may be said, we shall more readily discern our own good, and discerning achieve it.

There certainly is some plausibility in this argument, but it seems to be at variance with the existing sciences; for though they are all aiming at some good and striving to make up their deficiencies, they neglect to inquire about this universal good. And yet it is scarce likely that the professors of the several arts and sciences should not know, nor even look for, what would help them so much.

And indeed I am at a loss to know how the weaver or the carpenter would be furthered in his art by a knowledge of this absolute good, or how a man would be rendered more able to heal the sick or to command an army by contemplation of the pure form or idea. For it seems to me that the physician does not even seek for health in this abstract way, but seeks for the health of man, or rather of some particular man, for it is individuals that he has to heal.

7. Leaving these matters, then, let us return once more to the question, what this good can be of which we are in search.

It seems to be different in different kinds of action and in different arts, — one thing in medicine and another in war, and so on. What then is the good in each of these cases? Surely that for the sake of which all else is done. And that in medicine is health, in war is victory, in building is a house, — a different thing in each different case, but always, in whatever we do and in whatever we choose, the end. For it is always for the sake of the end that all else is done.

If then there be one end of all that man does, this end will be the realizable good, — or these ends, if there be more than one.

By this generalization our argument is brought to the same point as before.[1] This point we must try to explain more clearly.

We see that there are many ends. But some of these are chosen only as means, as wealth, flutes, and the whole class of instruments. And so it is plain that not all ends are final.

But the best of all things must, we conceive, be something final.

If then there be only one final end, this will be what we are seeking, — or if there be more than one, then the most final of them.

[1] See J. A. Stewart's *Notes on the Nicomachean Ethics*, Oxford, 1892.

Now that which is pursued as an end in itself is more final than that which is pursued as means to something else, and that which is never chosen as means than that which is chosen both as an end in itself and as means, and that is strictly final which is always chosen as an end in itself and never as means.

Happiness seems more than anything else to answer to this description: for we always choose it for itself, and never for the sake of something else; while honour and pleasure and reason, and all virtue or excellence, we choose partly indeed for themselves (for, apart from any result, we should choose each of them), but partly also for the sake of happiness, supposing that they will help to make us happy. But no one chooses happiness for the sake of these things, or as a means to anything else at all.

We seem to be led to the same conclusion when we start from the notion of self-sufficiency.

The final good is thought to be self-sufficing [or all-sufficing]. In applying this term we do not regard a man as an individual leading a solitary life, but we also take account of parents, children, wife, and, in short, friends and fellow-citizens generally, since man is naturally a social being. Some limit must indeed be set to this; for if you go on to parents and descendants and friends of friends, you will never come to a stop. But this we will consider further on: for the present we will take self-sufficing to mean what by itself makes life desirable and in want of nothing. And happiness is believed to answer to this description.

And further, happiness is believed to be the most desirable thing in the world, and that not merely as one among other good things: if it were merely one among other good things [so that other things could be added to it], it is plain that the addition of the least of other goods must make it more desirable; for the addition becomes a surplus of good, and of two goods the greater is always more desirable.

Thus it seems that happiness is something final and self-sufficing, and is the end of all that man does.

But perhaps the reader thinks that though no one will dispute the statement that happiness is the best thing in the world, yet a still more precise definition of it is needed.

This will best be gained, I think, by asking, What is the function of man? For as the goodness and the excellence of a piper or a sculptor, or the practiser of any art, and generally of those who have any function or business to do, lies in that function, so man's good would seem to lie in his function, if he has one.

But can we suppose that, while a carpenter or a cobbler has a function and a business of his own, man has no business and no function assigned him by nature? Nay, surely as his several members, eye and hand and foot, plainly have each his own function, so we must suppose that man also has some function over and above all these.

What then is it?

Life evidently he has in common even with the plants, but we want that which is peculiar to him. We must exclude, therefore, the life of mere nutrition and growth.

Next to this comes the life of sense; but this too he plainly shares with horses and cattle and all kinds of animals.

There remains then the life whereby he acts — the life of his rational nature, with its two sides or divisions, one rational as obeying reason, the other rational as having and exercising reason.

But as this expression is ambiguous, we must be understood to mean thereby the life that consists in the exercise of the faculties; for this seems to be more properly entitled to the name.

The function of man, then, is exercise of his vital faculties [or soul] on one side in obedience to reason, and on the other side with reason.

But what is called the function of a man of any profession and the function of a man who is good in that profession are generically the same, *e. g.* of a harper and of a good harper; and this holds in all cases without exception, only that in the case of the latter his superior excellence at his work is added; for we say a harper's function is to harp, and a good harper's to harp well.

(Man's function then being, as we say, a kind of life — that is to say, exercise of his faculties and action of various kinds with reason — the good man's function is to do this well and beautifully [or nobly]. But the function of anything is done well when it is done in accordance with the proper excellence of that thing.)

If this be so the result is that the good of man is exercise of his faculties in accordance with excellence or virtue, or, if there be more than one, in accordance with the best and most complete virtue.

But there must also be a full term of years for this exercise; for one swallow or one fine day does not make a spring, nor does one day or any small space of time make a blessed or happy man.

13. Since happiness is an exercise of the vital faculties in accordance with perfect virtue or excellence, we will now inquire about virtue or excellence; for this will probably help us in our inquiry about happiness.

And indeed the true statesman seems to be especially concerned with virtue, for he wishes to make the citizens good and obedient to the laws. Of this we have an example in the Cretan and the Lacedæmonian lawgivers, and any others who have resembled them. But if the inquiry belongs to Politics or the science of the state, it is plain that it will be in accordance with our original purpose to pursue it.

The virtue or excellence that we are to consider is, of course, the excellence of man; for it is the good of man and the happiness of man that we started to seek. And by the excellence of man I mean excellence not of body, but of soul; for happiness we take to be an activity of the soul.

If this be so, then it is evident that the statesman must have some knowledge of the soul, just as the man who is to heal the eye or the whole body must have some knowledge of them, and that the more in proportion as the science of the state is higher and better than medicine. But all educated physicians take much pains to know about the body.

As statesmen [or students of Politics], then, we must inquire into the nature of the soul, but in so doing we must keep our special purpose in view and go only so far as that requires; for to go into minuter detail would be too laborious for the present undertaking.

Now, there are certain doctrines about the soul which are stated elsewhere with sufficient precision, and these we will adopt.

Two parts of the soul are distinguished, an irrational and a rational part.

Whether these are separated as are the parts of the body or any divisible thing, or whether they are only distinguishable in thought but in fact inseparable, like concave and convex in the circumference of a circle, makes no difference for our present purpose.

Of the irrational part, again, one division seems to be common to all things that live, and to be possessed by plants — I mean that which causes nutrition and growth; for we must assume that all things that take nourishment have a faculty of this kind, even when they are embryos, and have the same faculty when they are full grown; at least, this is more reasonable than to suppose that they then have a different one.

The excellence of this faculty, then, is plainly one that man shares with other beings, and not specifically human.

And this is confirmed by the fact that in sleep this part of the soul, or this faculty, is thought to be most active, while the good and the bad man are undistinguishable when they are asleep (whence the saying that for half their lives there is no difference between the happy and the miserable; which indeed is what we should expect; for sleep is the cessation of the soul from those functions in respect of which it is called good or bad), except that they are to some slight extent roused by what goes on in their bodies, with the result that the dreams of the good man are better than those of ordinary people.

However, we need not pursue this further, and may dismiss the nutritive principle, since it has no place in the excellence of man.

But there seems to be another vital principle that is irrational, and yet in some way partakes of reason. In the case of the continent and of the incontinent man alike we praise the reason or the rational part, for it exhorts them rightly and urges them to do what is best; but there is plainly present in them another principle besides the rational one, which fights and struggles against the reason. For just as a paralyzed limb, when you will to move it to the right, moves on the contrary to the left, so is it

with the soul; the incontinent man's impulses run counter to his reason. Only whereas we see the refractory member in the case of the body, we do not see it in the case of the soul. But we must nevertheless, I think, hold that in the soul too there is something beside the reason, which opposes and runs counter to it (though in what sense it is distinct from the reason does not matter here).

It seems, however, to partake of reason also, as we said: at least, in the continent man it submits to the reason; while in the temperate and courageous man we may say it is still more obedient; for in him it is altogether in harmony with the reason.

The irrational part, then, it appears, is twofold. There is the vegetative faculty, which has no share of reason; and the faculty of appetite or of desire in general, which in a manner partakes of reason or is rational as listening to reason and submitting to its sway, — rational in the sense in which we speak of rational obedience to father or friends, not in the sense in which we speak of rational apprehension of mathematical truths. But all advice and all rebuke and exhortation testify that the irrational part is in some way amenable to reason.

If then we like to say that this part, too, has a share of reason, the rational part also will have two divisions: one rational in the strict sense as possessing reason in itself, the other rational as listening to reason as a man listens to his father.

Now, on this division of the faculties is based the division of excellence; for we speak of intellectual excellences and of moral excellences; wisdom and understanding and prudence we call intellectual, liberality and temperance we call moral virtues or excellences. When we are speaking of a man's moral character we do not say that he is wise or intelligent, but that he is gentle or temperate. But we praise the wise man, too, for his habit of mind or trained faculty; and a habit or trained faculty that is praiseworthy is what we call an excellence or virtue.

BOOK II. MORAL VIRTUE

1. Excellence, then, being of these two kinds, intellectual and moral, intellectual excellence owes its birth and growth mainly

to instruction, and so requires time and experience, while moral excellence is the result of habit or custom (ἔθος), and has accordingly in our language received a name formed by a slight change from ἔθος.[1]

From this it is plain that none of the moral excellences or virtues is implanted in us by nature; for that which is by nature cannot be altered by training. For instance, a stone naturally tends to fall downwards, and you could not train it to rise upwards, though you tried to do so by throwing it up ten thousand times, nor could you train fire to move downwards, nor accustom anything which naturally behaves in one way to behave in any other way.

The virtues, then, come neither by nature nor against nature, but nature gives the capacity for acquiring them, and this is developed by training.

Again, where we do things by nature we get the power first, and put this power forth in act afterwards: as we plainly see in the case of the senses; for it is not by constantly seeing and hearing that we acquire those faculties, but, on the contrary, we had the power first and then used it, instead of acquiring the power by the use. But the virtues we acquire by doing the acts, as is the case with the arts too. We learn an art by doing that which we wish to do when we have learned it; we become builders by building, and harpers by harping. And so by doing just acts we become just, and by doing acts of temperance and courage we become temperate and courageous.

This is attested, too, by what occurs in states; for the legislators make their citizens good by training; *i. e.* this is the wish of all legislators, and those who do not succeed in this miss their aim, and it is this that distinguishes a good from a bad constitution.

Again, both the moral virtues and the corresponding vices result from and are formed by the same acts; and this is the case with the arts also. It is by harping that good harpers and bad

[1] ἔθος, custom; ἦθος, character; ἠθικὴ ἀρετή, moral excellence: we have no similar sequence, but the Latin *mos, mores,* from which "morality" comes, covers both ἔθος and ἦθος

harpers alike are produced: and so with builders and the rest; by building well they will become good builders, and bad builders by building badly. Indeed, if it were not so, they would not want anybody to teach them, but would all be born either good or bad at their trades. And it is just the same with the virtues also. It is by our conduct in our intercourse with other men that we become just or unjust, and by acting in circumstances of danger, and training ourselves to feel fear or confidence, that we become courageous or cowardly. So, too, with our animal appetites and the passion of anger; for by behaving in this way or in that on the occasions with which these passions are concerned, some become temperate and gentle, and others profligate and ill-tempered. In a word, acts of any kind produce habits or characters of the same kind.

Hence we ought to make sure that our acts be of a certain kind; for the resulting character varies as they vary. It makes no small difference, therefore, whether a man be trained from his youth up in this way or in that, but a great difference, or rather all the difference.

2. But our present inquiry has not, like the rest, a merely speculative aim; we are not inquiring merely in order to know what excellence or virtue is, but in order to become good; for otherwise it would profit us nothing. We must ask therefore about these acts, and see of what kind they are to be; for, as we said, it is they that determine our habits or character.

First of all, then, that they must be in accordance with right reason is a common characteristic of them, which we shall here take for granted, reserving for future discussion the question what this right reason is, and how it is related to the other excellences.

But let it be understood, before we go on, that all reasoning on matters of practice must be in outline merely, and not scientifically exact: for, as we said at starting, the kind of reasoning to be demanded varies with the subject in hand; and in practical matters and questions of expediency there are no invariable laws, any more than in questions of health.

And if our general conclusions are thus inexact, still more

inexact is all reasoning about particular cases; for these fall under no system of scientifically established rules or traditional maxims, but the agent must always consider for himself what the special occasion requires, just as in medicine or navigation.

But though this is the case we must try to render what help we can.

First of all, then, we must observe that, in matters of this sort, to fall short and to exceed are alike fatal. This is plain (to illustrate what we cannot see by what we can see) in the case of strength and health. Too much and too little exercise alike destroy strength, and to take too much meat and drink, or to take too little, is equally ruinous to health, but the fitting amount produces and increases and preserves them. Just so, then, is it with temperance also, and courage, and the other virtues. The man who shuns and fears everything and never makes a stand, becomes a coward; while the man who fears nothing at all, but will face anything, becomes foolhardy. So, too, the man who takes his fill of any kind of pleasure, and abstains from none, is a profligate, but the man who shuns all (like him whom we call a "boor") is devoid of sensibility. Thus temperance and courage are destroyed both by excess and defect, but preserved by moderation.

But habits or types of character are not only produced and preserved and destroyed by the same occasions and the same means, but they will also manifest themselves in the same circumstances. This is the case with palpable things like strength. Strength is produced by taking plenty of nourishment and doing plenty of hard work, and the strong man, in turn, has the greatest capacity for these. And the case is the same with the virtues: by abstaining from pleasure we become temperate, and when we have become temperate we are best able to abstain. And so with courage: by habituating ourselves to despise danger, and to face it, we become courageous; and when we have become courageous, we are best able to face danger.

5. We have next to inquire what excellence or virtue is.

A quality of the soul is either (1) a passion or emotion, or (2) a power or faculty, or (3) a habit or trained faculty; and so vir-

tue must be one of these three. By (1) a passion or emotion we mean appetite, anger, fear, confidence, envy, joy, love, hate, longing, emulation, pity, or generally that which is accompanied by pleasure or pain; (2) a power or faculty is that in respect of which we are said to be capable of being affected in any of these ways, as, for instance, that in respect of which we are able to be angered or pained or to pity; and (3) a habit or trained faculty is that in respect of which we are well or ill regulated or disposed in the matter of our affections; as, for instance, in the matter of being angered, we are ill regulated if we are too violent or too slack, but if we are moderate in our anger we are well regulated. And so with the rest.

Now, the virtues are not emotions, nor are the vices: (1) because we are not called good or bad in respect of our emotions but are called so in respect of our virtues or vices; (2) because we are neither praised nor blamed in respect of our emotions (a man is not praised for being afraid or angry, nor blamed for being angry simply, but for being angry in a particular way), but we are praised or blamed in respect of our virtues or vices; (3) because we may be angered or frightened without deliberate choice, but the virtues are a kind of deliberate choice, or at least are impossible without it; and (4) because in respect of our emotions we are said to be moved, but in respect of our virtues and vices we are not said to be moved, but to be regulated or disposed in this way or in that.

For these same reasons also they are not powers or faculties; for we are not called either good or bad for being merely capable of emotion, nor are we either praised or blamed for this. And further, while nature gives us our powers or faculties, she does not make us either good or bad. (This point, however, we have already treated.)

If, then, the virtues be neither emotions nor faculties, it only remains for them to be habits or trained faculties.

6. We have thus found the genus to which virtue belongs; but we want to know, not only that it is a trained faculty, but also what species of trained faculty it is.

We may safely assert that the virtue or excellence of a thing

causes that thing both to be itself in good condition and to perform its function well. The excellence of the eye, for instance, makes both the eye and its work good; for it is by the excellence of the eye that we see well. So the proper excellence of the horse makes a horse what he should be, and makes him good at running, and carrying his rider, and standing a charge.

If, then, this holds good in all cases, the proper excellence or virtue of man will be the habit or trained faculty that makes a man good and makes him perform his function well.

How this is to be done we have already said, but we may exhibit the same conclusion in another way, by inquiring what the nature of this virtue is.

Now, if we have any quantity, whether continuous or discrete, it is possible to take either a larger [or too large], or a smaller [or too small], or an equal [or fair] amount, and that either absolutely or relatively to our own needs.

By an equal or fair amount I understand a mean amount, or one that lies between excess and deficiency.

By the absolute mean, or mean relatively to the thing itself, I understand that which is equidistant from both extremes, and this is one and the same for all.

By the mean relatively to us I understand that which is neither too much nor too little for us; and this is not one and the same for all.

For instance, if ten be larger [or too large] and two be smaller [or too small], if we take six we take the mean relatively to the thing itself [or the arithmetical mean]; for it exceeds one extreme by the same amount by which it is exceeded by the other extreme, and this is the mean in arithmetical proportion.

But the mean relatively to us cannot be found in this way. If ten pounds of food is too much for a given man to eat, and two pounds too little, it does not follow that the trainer will order him six pounds: for that also may perhaps be too much for the man in question, or too little; too little for Milo, too much for the beginner. The same holds true in running and wrestling.

And so we may say generally that a master in any art avoids

what is too much and what is too little, and seeks for the mean and chooses it — not the absolute but the relative mean.

If, then, every art or science perfects its work in this way, looking to the mean and bringing its work up to this standard (so that people are wont to say of a good work that nothing could be taken from it or added to it, implying that excellence is destroyed by excess or deficiency, but secured by observing the mean; and good artists, as we say, do in fact keep their eyes fixed on this in all that they do), and if virtue, like nature, is more exact and better than any art, it follows that virtue also must aim at the mean — virtue of course meaning moral virtue or excellence; for it has to do with passions and actions, and it is these that admit of excess and deficiency and the mean. For instance, it is possible to feel fear, confidence, desire, anger, pity, and generally to be affected pleasantly and painfully, either too much or too little, in either case wrongly; but to be thus affected at the right times, and on the right occasions, and towards the right persons, and with the right object, and in the right fashion, is the mean course and the best course, and these are characteristics of virtue. And in the same way our outward acts also admit of excess and deficiency, and the mean or due amount.

Virtue, then, has to deal with feelings or passions and with outward acts, in which excess is wrong and deficiency also is blamed, but the mean amount is praised and is right — both of which are characteristics of virtue.

Virtue, then, is a kind of moderation (μεσότης τις), inasmuch as it aims at the mean or moderate amount (τὸ μέσον).

Again, there are many ways of going wrong (for evil is infinite in nature, to use a Pythagorean figure, while good is finite), but only one way of going right; so that the one is easy and the other hard — easy to miss the mark and hard to hit. On this account also, then, excess and deficiency are characteristic of vice, hitting the mean is characteristic of virtue: —

Goodness is simple, ill takes any shape.

Virtue, then, is a habit or trained faculty of choice, the characteristic of which lies in moderation or observance of the mean

relatively to the persons concerned, as determined by reason, *i. e.* by the reason by which the prudent man would determine it. And it is a moderation, firstly, inasmuch as it comes in the middle or mean between two vices, one on the side of excess, the other on the side of defect; and, secondly, inasmuch as, while these vices fall short of or exceed the due measure in feeling and in action, it finds and chooses the mean, middling, or moderate amount.

Regarded in its essence, therefore, or according to the definition of its nature, virtue is a moderation or middle state, but viewed in its relation to what is best and right it is the extreme of perfection.

But it is not all actions nor all passions that admit of moderation; there are some whose very names imply badness, as malevolence, shamelessness, envy, and, among acts, adultery, theft, murder. These and all other like things are blamed as being bad in themselves, and not merely in their excess or deficiency. It is impossible therefore to go right in them; they are always wrong: rightness and wrongness in such things (*e. g.* in adultery) does not depend upon whether it is the right person and occasion and manner, but the mere doing of any one of them is wrong.

It would be equally absurd to look for moderation or excess or deficiency in unjust, cowardly, or profligate conduct; for then there would be moderation in excess or deficiency, and excess in excess, and deficiency in deficiency.

The fact is that just as there can be no excess or deficiency in temperance or courage because the mean or moderate amount is, in a sense, an extreme, so in these kinds of conduct also there can be no moderation or excess or deficiency, but the acts are wrong however they be done. For, to put it generally, there cannot be moderation in excess or deficiency, nor excess or deficiency in moderation.

7. But it is not enough to make these general statements [about virtue and vice]: we must go on and apply them to particulars [*i. e.* to the several virtues and vices]. For in reasoning about matters of conduct general statements are too vague, and do not convey so much truth as particular propositions. It is with par-

ticulars that conduct is concerned: our statements, therefore, when applied to these particulars, should be found to hold good.

These particulars then [*i. e.* the several virtues and vices and the several acts and affections with which they deal], we will take from the following table.

Moderation in the feelings of fear and confidence is courage: of those that exceed, he that exceeds in fearlessness has no name (as often happens), but he that exceeds in confidence is foolhardy, while he that exceeds in fear, but is deficient in confidence, is cowardly.

Moderation in respect of certain pleasures and also (though to a less extent) certain pains is temperance, while excess is profligacy. But defectiveness in the matter of these pleasures is hardly ever found, and so this sort of people also have as yet received no name: let us put them down as "void of sensibility."

In the matter of giving and taking money, moderation is liberality, excess and deficiency are prodigality and illiberality. But both vices exceed and fall short in giving and taking in contrary ways: the prodigal exceeds in spending, but falls short in taking; while the illiberal man exceeds in taking, but falls short in spending. (For the present we are but giving an outline or summary, and aim at nothing more; we shall afterwards treat these points in greater detail.)

But, besides these, there are other dispositions in the matter of money: there is a moderation which is called magnificence (for the magnificent is not the same as the liberal man: the former deals with large sums, the latter with small), and an excess which is called bad taste or vulgarity, and a deficiency which is called meanness; and these vices differ from those which are opposed to liberality: how they differ will be explained later.

With respect to honour and disgrace, there is a moderation which is high-mindedness, an excess which may be called vanity, and a deficiency which is little-mindedness.

But just as we said that liberality is related to magnificence, differing only in that it deals with small sums, so here there is a virtue related to high-mindedness, and differing only in that it

is concerned with small instead of great honours. A man may have a due desire for honour, and also more or less than a due desire: he that carries this desire to excess is called ambitious, he that has not enough of it is called unambitious, but he that has the due amount has no name. There are also no abstract names for the characters, except "ambition," corresponding to ambitious. And on this account those who occupy the extremes lay claim to the middle place. And in common parlance, too, the moderate man is sometimes called ambitious and sometimes unambitious, and sometimes the ambitious man is praised and sometimes the unambitious. Why this is we will explain afterwards; for the present we will follow out our plan and enumerate the other types of character.

In the matter of anger also we find excess and deficiency and moderation. The characters themselves hardly have recognized names, but as the moderate man is here called gentle, we will call his character gentleness; of those who go into extremes, we may take the term wrathful for him who exceeds, with wrathfulness for the vice, and wrathless for him who is deficient, with wrathlessness for his character.

Besides these, there are three kinds of moderation, bearing some resemblance to one another, and yet different. They all have to do with intercourse in speech and action, but they differ in that one has to do with the truthfulness of this intercourse, while the other two have to do with its pleasantness — one of the two with pleasantness in matters of amusement, the other with pleasantness in all the relations of life. We must therefore speak of these qualities also in order that we may the more plainly see how, in all cases, moderation is praiseworthy, while the extreme courses are neither right nor praiseworthy, but blamable.

In these cases also names are for the most part wanting, but we must try, here as elsewhere, to coin names ourselves, in order to make our argument clear and easy to follow.

In the matter of truth, then, let us call him who observes the mean a true [or truthful] person, and observance of the mean truth [or truthfulness]: pretence, when it exaggerates, may be

alled boasting, and the person a boaster; when it understates, et the names be irony and ironical.

With regard to pleasantness in amusement, he who observes he mean may be called witty, and his character wittiness; excess nay be called buffoonery, and the man a buffoon; while boorish nay stand for the person who is deficient, and boorishness for is character.

With regard to pleasantness in the other affairs of life, he who nakes himself properly pleasant may be called friendly, and his noderation friendliness; he that exceeds may be called obse- quious if he have no ulterior motive, but a flatterer if he has an ye to his own advantage; he that is deficient in this respect, nd always makes himself disagreeable, may be called a quar- elsome or peevish fellow.

Moreover, in mere emotions and in our conduct with regard o them, there are ways of observing the mean; for instance shame αἰδώς) is not a virtue, but yet the modest (αἰδήμων) man is raised. For in these matters also we speak of this man as ob- erving the mean, of that man as going beyond it (as the shame- aced man whom the least thing makes shy), while he who is leficient in the feeling, or lacks it altogether, is called shameless; ut the term modest (αἰδήμων) is applied to him who observes he mean.

Righteous indignation, again, hits the mean between envy and nalevolence. These have to do with feelings of pleasure and ain at what happens to our neighbours. A man is called right- ously indignant when he feels pain at the sight of undeserved rosperity, but your envious man goes beyond him and is pained y the sight of any one in prosperity, while the malevolent man s so far from being pained that he actually exults in the misfor- unes of his neighbours.

But we shall have another opportunity of discussing these natters.

As for justice, the term is used in more senses than one; we vill, therefore, after disposing of the above questions, distinguish hese various senses, and show how each of these kinds of justice s a kind of moderation.

And then we will treat of the intellectual virtues in the same way.

8. There are, as we said, three classes of disposition, viz. two kinds of vice, one marked by excess, the other by deficiency, and one kind of virtue, the observance of the mean. Now, each is in a way opposed to each, for the extreme dispositions are opposed both to the mean or moderate disposition and to one another, while the moderate disposition is opposed to both the extremes. Just as a quantity which is equal to a given quantity is also greater when compared with a less, and less when compared with a greater quantity, so the mean or moderate dispositions exceed as compared with the defective dispositions, and fall short as compared with the excessive dispositions, both in feeling and in action; *e. g.* the courageous man seems foolhardy as compared with the coward, and cowardly as compared with the foolhardy; and similarly the temperate man appears profligate in comparison with the insensible, and insensible in comparison with the profligate man; and the liberal man appears prodigal by the side of the illiberal man, and illiberal by the side of the prodigal man.

And so the extreme characters try to displace the mean or moderate character, and each represents him as falling into the opposite extreme, the coward calling the courageous man foolhardy, the foolhardy calling him coward, and so on in other cases.

But while the mean and the extremes are thus opposed to one another, the extremes are strictly contrary to each other rather than to the mean; for they are further removed from one another than from the mean, as that which is greater than a given magnitude is further from that which is less, and that which is less is further from that which is greater, than either the greater or the less is from that which is equal to the given magnitude.

Sometimes, again, an extreme, when compared with the mean, has a sort of resemblance to it, as foolhardiness to courage, or prodigality to liberality; but there is the greatest possible dissimilarity between the extremes.

Again, "things that are as far as possible removed from each other" is the accepted definition of contraries, so that the further things are removed from each other the more contrary they are.

In comparison with the mean, however, it is sometimes the deficiency that is the more opposed, and sometimes the excess; *e. g.* foolhardiness, which is excess, is not so much opposed to courage as cowardice, which is deficiency; but insensibility, which is lack of feeling, is not so much opposed to temperance as profligacy, which is excess.

The reasons for this are two. One is the reason derived from the nature of the matter itself: since one extreme is, in fact, nearer and more similar to the mean, we naturally do not oppose it to the mean so strongly as the other; *e. g.* as foolhardiness seems more similar to courage and nearer to it, and cowardice more dissimilar, we speak of cowardice as the opposite rather than the other: for that which is further removed from the mean seems to be more opposed to it.

This, then, is one reason, derived from the nature of the thing itself. Another reason lies in ourselves: and it is this — those things to which we happen to be more prone by nature appear to be more opposed to the mean: *e. g.* our natural inclination is rather towards indulgence in pleasure, and so we more easily fall into profligate than into regular habits: those courses, then, on which we are more apt to run to great lengths are spoken of as more opposed to the mean; and thus profligacy, which is an excess, is more opposed to temperance than the deficiency is.

9. We have sufficiently explained, then, that moral virtue is moderation or observance of the mean, and in what sense, viz. (1) as holding a middle position between two vices, one on the side of excess, and the other on the side of deficiency, and (2) as aiming at the mean or moderate amount both in feeling and in action.

And on this account it is a hard thing to be good; for finding the middle or the mean in each case is a hard thing, just as finding the middle or centre of a circle is a thing that is not within the power of everybody, but only of him who has the requisite knowledge.

Thus any one can be angry — that is quite easy; any one can give money away or spend it: but to do these things to the right person, to the right extent, at the right time, with the right object,

and in the right manner, is not what everybody can do, and is by no means easy; and that is the reason why right doing is rare and praiseworthy and noble.

He that aims at the mean, then, should first of all strive to avoid that extreme which is more opposed to it, as Calypso[1] bids Ulysses —

> Clear of these smoking breakers keep thy ship.

For of the extremes one is more dangerous, the other less. Since then it is hard to hit the mean precisely, we must "row when we cannot sail," as the proverb has it, and choose the least of two evils; and that will be best effected in the way we have described.

And secondly we must consider, each for himself, what we are most prone to — for different natures are inclined to different things — which we may learn by the pleasure or pain we feel. And then we must bend ourselves in the opposite direction; for by keeping well away from error we shall fall into the middle course, as we straighten a bent stick by bending it the other way.

But in all cases we must be especially on our guard against pleasant things, and against pleasure; for we can scarce judge her impartially. And so, in our behaviour towards her, we should imitate the behaviour of the old counsellors towards Helen,[2] and in all cases repeat their saying: if we dismiss her we shall be less likely to go wrong.

This then, in outline, is the course by which we shall best be able to hit the mean.

But it is a hard task, we must admit, especially in a particular case. It is not easy to determine, for instance, how and with whom one ought to be angry, and upon what grounds, and for how long; for public opinion sometimes praises those who fall short, and calls them gentle, and sometimes applies the term manly to those who show a harsh temper.

In fact, a slight error, whether on the side of excess or deficiency, is not blamed, but only a considerable error; for then there can be no mistake. But it is hardly possible to determine by reasoning how far or to what extent a man must err in order

[1] Homer's *Odyssey*, xii. 101–110, and 219–220: Calypso should be Circe.
[2] Homer's *Iliad*, iii. 154–164.

to incur blame; and indeed matters that fall within the scope of perception never can be so determined. Such matters lie within the region of particulars, and can only be determined by perception.

So much then is plain, that the middle character is in all cases to be praised, but that we ought to incline sometimes towards excess, sometimes towards deficiency; for in this way we shall most easily hit the mean and attain to right doing.

BOOK III. THE WILL

VIRTUE AND VICE VOLUNTARY

4. Wish, we have already said, is for the end; but whereas some hold that the object of wish is the good, others hold that it is what seems good.

Those who maintain that the object of wish is the good have to admit that what those wish for who choose wrongly is not object of wish (for if so it would be good; but it may so happen that it was bad); on the other hand, those who maintain that the object of wish is what seems good have to admit that there is nothing which is naturally object of wish, but that each wishes for what seems good to him — different and even contrary things seeming good to different people.

As neither of these alternatives quite satisfies us, perhaps we had better say that the good is the real object of wish (without any qualifying epithet), but that what seems good is object of wish to each man. The good man, then, wishes for the real object of wish; but what the bad man wishes for may be anything whatever; just as, with regard to the body, those who are in good condition find those things healthy that are really healthy, while those who are diseased find other things healthy (and it is just the same with things bitter, sweet, hot, heavy, etc.): for the good or ideal man judges each case correctly, and in each case what is true seems true to him.

For, corresponding to each of our trained faculties, there is a special form of the noble and the pleasant, and perhaps there is

nothing so distinctive of the good or ideal man as the power he has of discerning these special forms in each case, being himself, as it were, their standard and measure.

What misleads people seems to be in most cases pleasure; it seems to be a good thing, even when it is not. So they choose what is pleasant as good, and shun pain as evil.

5. We have seen that, while we wish for the end, we deliberate upon and choose the means thereto.

Actions that are concerned with means, then, will be guided by choice, and so will be voluntary.

But the acts in which the virtues are manifested are concerned with means.

Therefore virtue depends upon ourselves: and vice likewise. For where it lies with us to do, it lies with us not to do. Where we can say no, we can say yes. If then the doing a deed, which is noble, lies with us, the not doing it, which is disgraceful, lies with us; and if the not doing, which is noble, lies with us, the doing, which is disgraceful, also lies with us. But if the doing and likewise the not doing of noble or base deeds lies with us, and if this is, as we found, identical with being good or bad, then it follows that it lies with us to be worthy or worthless men.

And so the saying —

None would be wicked, none would not be blessed,

seems partly false and partly true: no one indeed is blessed against his will; but vice is voluntary.

If we deny this, we must dispute the statements made just now, and must contend that man is not the originator and the parent of his actions, as of his children.

But if those statements commend themselves to us, and if we are unable to trace our acts to any other sources than those that depend upon ourselves, then that whose source is within us must itself depend upon us and be voluntary.

This seems to be attested, moreover, by each one of us in private life, and also by the legislators; for they correct and punish those that do evil (except when it is done under compulsion, or through ignorance for which the agent is not responsible), and

honour those that do noble deeds, evidently intending to encourage the one sort and discourage the other. But no one encourages us to do that which does not depend on ourselves, and which is not voluntary: it would be useless to be persuaded not to feel heat or pain or hunger and so on, as we should feel them all the same.

I say "ignorance for which the agent is not responsible," for the ignorance itself is punished by the law, if the agent appear to be responsible for his ignorance, *e. g.* for an offence committed in a fit of drunkenness the penalty is doubled: for the origin of the offence lies in the man himself; he might have avoided the intoxication, which was the cause of his ignorance. Again, ignorance of any of the ordinances of the law, which a man ought to know and easily can know, does not avert punishment. And so in other cases, where ignorance seems to be the result of negligence, the offender is punished, since it lay with him to remove this ignorance; for he might have taken the requisite trouble.

It may be objected that it was the man's character not to take the trouble.

We reply that men are themselves responsible for acquiring such a character by a dissolute life, and for being unjust or profligate in consequence of repeated acts of wrong, or of spending their time in drinking and so on. For it is repeated acts of a particular kind that give a man a particular character.

This is shown by the way in which men train themselves for any kind of contest or performance: they practise continually.

Not to know, then, that repeated acts of this or that kind produce a corresponding character or habit, shows an utter want of sense.

Moreover, it is absurd to say that he who acts unjustly does not wish to be unjust, or that he who behaves profligately does not wish to be profligate.

But if a man knowingly does acts which must make him unjust, he will be voluntarily unjust; though it does not follow that, if he wishes it, he can cease to be unjust and be just, any more than he who is sick can, if he wishes it, be whole. And it may be that he is voluntarily sick, through living incontinently and disobeying the doctor. At one time, then, he had the option

not to be sick, but he no longer has it now that he has thrown away his health. When you have discharged a stone it is no longer in your power to call it back; but nevertheless the throwing and casting away of that stone rests with you; for the beginning of its flight depended upon you.

Just so the unjust or the profligate man at the beginning was free not to acquire this character, and therefore he is voluntarily unjust or profligate; but now that he has acquired it, he is no longer free to put it off.

But it is not only our mental or moral vices that are voluntary; bodily vices also are sometimes voluntary, and then are censured. We do not censure natural ugliness, but we do censure that which is due to negligence and want of exercise. And so with weakness and infirmity: we should never reproach a man who was born blind, or had lost his sight in an illness or by a blow — we should rather pity him; but we should all censure a man who had blinded himself by excessive drinking or any other kind of profligacy.

We see, then, that of the vices of the body it is those that depend on ourselves that are censured, while those that do not depend on ourselves are not censured. And if this be so, then in other fields also those vices that are blamed must depend upon ourselves.

Some people may perhaps object to this.

"All men," they may say, "desire that which appears good to them, but cannot control this appearance; a man's character, whatever it be, decides what shall appear to him to be the end."

If, I answer, each man be in some way responsible for his habits or character, then in some way he must be responsible for this appearance also.

But if this be not the case, then a man is not responsible for, or is not the cause of, his own evil doing, but it is through ignorance of the end that he does evil, fancying that thereby he will secure the greatest good: and the striving towards the true end does not depend on our own choice, but a man must be born with a gift of sight, so to speak, if he is to discriminate rightly and to choose what is really good: and he is truly well born who is by nature richly endowed with this gift; for, as it is the greatest and

the fairest gift, which we cannot acquire or learn from another, but must keep all our lives just as nature gave it to us, to be well and nobly born in this respect is to be well born in the truest and completest sense.

Now, granting this to be true, how will virtue be any more voluntary than vice?

For whether it be nature or anything else that determines what shall appear to be the end, it is determined in the same way for both alike, for the good man as for the bad, and both alike refer all their acts of whatever kind to it.

And so whether we hold that it is not merely nature that decides what appears to each to be the end (whatever that be), but that the man himself contributes something; or whether we hold that the end is fixed by nature, but that virtue is voluntary, inasmuch as the good man voluntarily takes the steps to that end — in either case vice will be just as voluntary as virtue; for self is active in the bad man just as much as in the good man, in choosing the particular acts at least, if not in determining the end.

If then, as is generally allowed, the virtues are voluntary (for we do, in fact, in some way help to make our character, and, by being of a certain character, give a certain complexion to our idea of the end), the vices also must be voluntary; for all this applies equally to them.

We have thus described in outline the nature of the virtues in general, and have said that they are forms of moderation or modes of observing the mean, and that they are habits or trained faculties, and that they show themselves in the performance of the same acts which produce them, and that they depend on ourselves and are voluntary, and that they follow the guidance of right reason. But our particular acts are not voluntary in the same sense as our habits: for we are masters of our acts from beginning to end when we know the particular circumstances; but we are masters of the beginnings only of our habits or characters, while their growth by gradual steps is imperceptible, like the growth of disease. Inasmuch, however, as it lay with us to employ or not to employ our faculties in this way, the resulting characters are on that account voluntary.

BOOK VI. THE INTELLECTUAL VIRTUES

1. The virtues or excellences of the mind or soul, it will be remembered, we divided into two classes, and called the one moral and the other intellectual. The moral excellences or virtues we have already discussed in detail; let us now examine the other class, the intellectual excellences, after some preliminary remarks about the soul.

We said before that the soul consists of two parts, the rational and the irrational part. We will now make a similar division of the former, and will assume that there are two rational faculties: (1) that by which we know those things that depend on invariable principles, (2) that by which we know those things that are variable. For to generically different objects must correspond generically different faculties, if, as we hold, it is in virtue of some kind of likeness or kinship with their objects that our faculties are able to know them.

Let us call the former the scientific or demonstrative, the latter the calculative or deliberative faculty. For to deliberate is the same as to calculate, and no one deliberates about things that are invariable. One division then of the rational faculty may be fairly called the calculative faculty.

Our problem, then, is to find what each of these faculties becomes in its full development, or in its best state; for that will be its excellence or virtue.

But its excellence will bear direct reference to its proper function.

2. Now, the faculties which guide us in action and in the apprehension of truth are three: sense, reason,[1] and desire.

The first of these cannot originate action, as we see from the fact that brutes have sense but are incapable of action.

If we take the other two we find two modes of reasoning, viz. affirmation and negation [or assent and denial], and two corresponding modes of desire, viz. pursuit and avoidance [or attraction and repulsion].

[1] *νοῦς*: the word is used here in its widest sense.

Now, moral virtue is a habit or formed faculty of choice or purpose, and purpose is desire following upon deliberation.

It follows, then, that if the purpose is to be all it should be, both the calculation or reasoning must be true and the desire right, and that the very same things must be assented to by the former and pursued by the latter.

This kind of reasoning, then, and this sort of truth has to do with action.

But speculative reasoning that has to do neither with action nor production is good or bad according as it is true or false simply: for the function of the intellect is always the apprehension of truth; but the function of the practical intellect is the apprehension of truth in agreement with right desire.

Purpose, then, is the cause — not the final but the efficient cause or origin — of action, and the origin of purpose is desire and calculation of means; so that purpose necessarily implies on the one hand the faculty of reason and its exercise, and on the other hand a certain moral character or state of the desires; for right action and the contrary kind of action are alike impossible without both reasoning and moral character.

Mere reasoning, however, can never set anything going, but only reasoning about means to an end — what may be called practical reasoning (which practical reasoning also regulates production; for in making anything you always have an ulterior object in view — what you make is desired not as an end in itself, but only as a means to, or a condition of, something else; but what you do is an end in itself, for well-doing or right action is the end, and this is the object of desire).

Purpose, then, may be called either a reason that desires, or a desire that reasons; and this faculty of originating action constitutes a man.

No past event can be purposed; *e. g.* no one purposes to have sacked Troy; for no one deliberates about that which is past, but about that which is to come, and which is variable: but the past cannot be undone; so that Agathon is right when he says:—

> This thing alone not God himself can do —
> To make undone that which hath once been done.

We have thus found that both divisions of the reason, or both the intellectual faculties, have the attainment of truth for their function; that developed state of each, then, in which it best attains truth will be its excellence or virtue.

3. Let us describe these virtues then, starting afresh from the beginning.

Let us assume that the modes in which the mind arrives at truth, either in the way of affirmation or negation, are five in number, viz. art, science, prudence, wisdom, reason;[1] for conception and opinion may be erroneous.

What science is we may learn from the following considerations (for we want a precise account, and must not content ourselves with metaphors). We all suppose that what we know with scientific knowledge is invariable; but of that which is variable we cannot say, so soon as it is out of sight, whether it is in existence or not. The object of science, then, is necessary. Therefore it is eternal; for whatever is of its own nature necessary is eternal: and what is eternal neither begins nor ceases to be.

Further, it is held that all science can be taught, and that what can be known in the way of science can be learnt. But all teaching starts from something already known, as we have explained in the Analytics; for it proceeds either by induction or by syllogism. Now, it is induction that leads the learner up to universal principles, while syllogism starts from these. There are principles, then, from which syllogism starts, which are not arrived at by syllogism, and which, therefore, must be arrived at by induction.[2]

Science, then, may be defined as a habit or formed faculty of demonstration, with all the further qualifications which are enumerated in the Analytics. It is necessary to add this, because it is only when the principles of our knowledge are accepted and known to us in a particular way, that we can properly be said to have scientific knowledge; for unless these principles are better

[1] *νοῦς* — used now in a narrower special sense which will presently be explained.

[2] Though, as we see later, induction can elicit them from experience only because they are already latent in that experience.

known to us than the conclusions based upon them, our knowledge will be merely accidental.[1]

This, then, may be taken as our account of science.

4. That which is variable includes that which man makes and that which man does; but making or production is different from doing or action (here we adopt the popular distinctions). The habit or formed faculty of acting with reason or calculation, then, is different from the formed faculty of producing with reason or calculation. And so the one cannot include the other; for action is not production, nor is production action.

Now, the builder's faculty is one of the arts, and may be described as a certain formed faculty of producing with calculation; and there is no art which is not a faculty of this kind, nor is there any faculty of this kind which is not an art: an art, then, is the same thing as a formed faculty of producing with correct calculation.

And every art is concerned with bringing something into being, *i. e.* with contriving or calculating how to bring into being some one of those things that can either be or not be, and the cause of whose production lies in the producer, not in the thing itself which is produced. For art has not to do with that which is or comes into being of necessity, nor with the products of nature; for these have the cause of their production in themselves.

Production and action being different, art of course has to do with production, and not with action. And, in a certain sense, its domain is the same as that of chance or fortune, as Agathon says: —

Art waits on fortune, fortune waits on art.

Art, then, as we said, is a certain formed faculty or habit of production with correct reasoning or calculation, and the contrary of this (ἀτεχνία) is a habit of production with incorrect calculation, the field of both being that which is variable.

5. In order to ascertain what prudence is, we will first ask who they are whom we call prudent.

It seems to be characteristic of a prudent man that he is able

[1] We may know truths of science, but unless we know these in their necessary connection, we have not scientific knowledge.

to deliberate well about what is good or expedient for himself, not with a view to some particular end, such as health or strength, but with a view to well-being or living well.

This is confirmed by the fact that we apply the name sometimes to those who deliberate well in some particular field, when they calculate well the means to some particular good end, in matters that do not fall within the sphere of art. So we may say, generally, that a man who can deliberate well is prudent.

But no one deliberates about that which cannot be altered, nor about that which it is not in his power to do.

Now science, we saw, implies demonstration; but things whose principles or causes are variable do not admit of demonstration; for everything that depends upon these principles or causes is also variable; and, on the other hand, things that are necessarily determined do not admit of deliberation. It follows, therefore, that prudence cannot be either a science or an art: it cannot be a science, because the sphere of action is that which is alterable; it cannot be an art, because production is generically different from action.

It follows from all this that prudence is a formed faculty that apprehends truth by reasoning or calculation, and issues in action, in the domain of human good and ill; for while production has another end than itself, this is not so with action, since good action or well doing is itself the end.

For this reason Pericles and men who resemble him are considered prudent, because they are able to see what is good for themselves and for men; and this we take to be the character of those who are able to manage a household or a state.

This, too, is the reason why we call temperance σωφροσύνη, signifying thereby that it is the virtue which preserves prudence. But what temperance preserves is this particular kind of judgment. For it is not *any* kind of judgment that is destroyed or perverted by the presentation of pleasant or painful objects (not such a judgment, for instance, as that the angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles), but only judgments about matters of practice. For the principles of practice [or the causes which originate action] are the ends for the sake of which acts are done; but when

a man is corrupted by pleasure or pain, he straightway loses sight of the principle, and no longer sees that this is the end for the sake of which, and as a means to which, each particular act should be chosen and done; for vice is apt to obliterate the principle.

Our conclusion then is that prudence is a formed faculty which apprehends truth by reasoning or calculation, and issues in action, in the field of human good.

Moreover, art [or the artistic faculty] has its excellence [or perfect development] in something other than itself, but this is not so with prudence. Again, in the domain of art voluntary error is not so bad as involuntary, but it is worse in the case of prudence, as it is in the case of all the virtues or excellences. It is plain, then, that prudence is a virtue or excellence, and not an art.

And the rational parts of the soul or the intellectual faculties being two in number, prudence will be the virtue of the second, [the calculative part or] the faculty of opinion; for opinion deals with that which is variable, and so does prudence.

But it is something more than "a formed faculty of apprehending truth by reasoning or calculation;" as we see from the fact that such a faculty may be lost, but prudence, once acquired, can never be lost.

6. Science is a mode of judging that deals with universal and necessary truths; but truths that can be demonstrated depend upon principles, and (since science proceeds by demonstrative reasoning) every science has its principles. The principles, then, on which the truths of science depend cannot fall within the province of science, nor yet of art or prudence; for a scientific truth is one that can be demonstrated, but art and prudence have to do with that which is variable.

Nor can they fall within the province of wisdom; for it is characteristic of the wise man to have a demonstrative knowledge of certain things.

But the habits of mind or formed faculties by which we apprehend truth without any mixture of error, whether in the domain of things invariable or in the domain of things variable, are science, prudence, wisdom, and reason. If then no one of the

first three (prudence, science, wisdom) can be the faculty which apprehends these principles, the only possible conclusion is that they are apprehended by reason.

7. The term σοφία (wisdom)[1] is sometimes applied in the domain of the arts to those who are consummate masters of their art; *e. g.* it is applied to Phidias as a master of sculpture, and to Polyclitus for his skill in portrait-statues; and in this application it means nothing else than excellence of art or perfect development of the artistic faculty.

But there are also men who are considered wise, not in part nor in any particular thing (as Homer says in the Margites, —

> Him the gods gave no skill with spade or plough,
> Nor made him wise in aught),

but generally wise. In this general sense, then, wisdom plainly will be the most perfect of the sciences.

The wise man, then, must not only know what follows from the principles of knowledge, but also know the truth about those principles. Wisdom, therefore, will be the union of [intuitive] reason with [demonstrative] scientific knowledge, or scientific knowledge of the noblest objects with its crowning perfection, so to speak, added to it. For it would be absurd to suppose that the political faculty or prudence is the highest of our faculties, unless indeed man is the best of all things in the universe.

Now, as the terms wholesome and good mean one thing in the case of men and another in the case of fishes, while white and straight always have the same meaning, we must all allow that wise means one thing always, while prudent means different things; for we should all say that those who are clear-sighted in their own affairs are prudent, and deem them fit to be entrusted with those affairs. (And for this reason we sometimes apply the term prudent even to animals, when they show a faculty of foresight in what concerns their own life.)

Moreover, it is plain that wisdom cannot be the same as statesmanship. If we apply the term wisdom to knowledge of what is advantageous to ourselves, there will be many kinds of wisdom;

[1] Of course we do not use "wisdom" in this sense.

for the knowledge of what is good will not be one and the same for all animals, but different for each species. It can no more be one than the art of healing can be one and the same for all kinds of living things.

Man may be superior to all other animals, but that will not make any difference here; for there are other things of a far diviner nature than man, as — to take the most conspicuous instance — the heavenly bodies.

It is plain, then, after what we have said, that wisdom is the union of scientific [or demonstrative] knowledge and [intuitive] reason about objects of the noblest nature.

And on this account people call Anaxagoras and Thales and men of that sort wise, but not prudent, seeing them to be ignorant of their own advantage; and say that their knowledge is something out of the common, wonderful, hard of attainment, nay superhuman, but useless, since it is no human good that they seek.

Prudence, on the other hand, deals with human affairs, and with matters that admit of deliberation: for the prudent man's special function, as we conceive it, is to deliberate well; but no one deliberates about what is invariable, or about matters in which there is not some end, in the sense of some realizable good. But a man is said to deliberate well (without any qualifying epithet) when he is able, by a process of reasoning or calculation, to arrive at what is best for man in matters of practice.

Prudence, moreover, does not deal in general propositions only, but implies knowledge of particular facts also; for it issues in action, and the field of action is the field of particulars.

This is the reason why some men that lack [scientific] knowledge are more efficient in practice than others that have it, especially men of wide experience; for if you know that light meat is digestible and wholesome, but do not know what meats are light, you will not be able to cure people so well as a man who only knows that chicken is light and wholesome.

But prudence is concerned with practice; so that it needs knowledge both of general truths and of particular facts, but more especially the latter.

ZENO
(356-264)

From DIOGENES LAERTIUS' LIVES AND OPINIONS OF EMINENT PHILOSOPHERS

Translated from the Greek by*
CHARLES D. YONGE

BOOK VII. THE ETHICS OF THE STOICS

LI. The ethical part of philosophy they [the Stoics] divide into the topic of inclination, the topic of good and bad, the topic of the passions, the topic of virtue, the topic of the chief good, and of primary estimation, and of actions; the topic of what things are becoming, and of exhortation and dissuasion. And this division is the one laid down by Chrysippus, and Archedemus, and Zeno of Tarsus, and Apollodorus, and Diogenes, and Antipater, and Posidonius. For Zeno of Cittium and Cleanthes have, as being more ancient they were likely to, adopted a more simple method of treating these subjects. But these men made a division into logic and natural philosophy.

LII. They say that the first inclination which an animal has is to protect itself, as nature brings herself to take an interest in it from the beginning, as Chrysippus affirms in the first book of his treatise on Ends; where he says, that the first and dearest object to every animal is its own existence, and its consciousness of that existence. For that it is not natural for any animal to be alienated from itself, or even to be brought into such a state as to be indifferent to itself, being neither alienated from nor interested in itself. It remains, therefore, that we must assert that nature has bound the animal to itself by the greatest unanimity and affec-

* From Διογένους Λαερτίου περὶ βίου, δογμάτων, καὶ ἀποφθεγμάτων τῶν ἐν φιλοσοφίᾳ εὐδοκιμησάντων, βιβλία δέκα. Reprinted from *Diogenes Laertius' Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers*, translated by C. D. Yonge. London, 1853.

tion; for by that means it repels all that is injurious, and attracts all that is akin to it and desirable. But as for what some people say, that the first inclination of animals is to pleasure, they say what is false. For they say that pleasure, if there be any such thing at all, is an accessory only, which nature, having sought it out by itself, as well as those things which are adapted to its constitution, receives incidentally in the same manner as animals are pleased, and plants made to flourish.

Moreover, say they, nature makes no difference between animals and plants, when she regulates them so as to leave them without voluntary motion or sense; and some things too take place in ourselves in the same manner as in plants. But, as inclination in animals tends chiefly to the point of making them pursue what is appropriate to them, we may say that their inclinations are regulated by nature. And as reason is given to rational animals according to a more perfect principle, it follows, that to live correctly according to reason, is properly predicated of those who live according to nature. For nature is as it were the artist who produces the inclination.

LIII. On which account ZENO was the first writer who, in his treatise on the Nature of Man, said that the chief good was confessedly to live according to nature; which is to live according to virtue, for nature leads us to this point. And in like manner Cleanthes speaks in his treatise on Pleasure, and so do Posidonius and Hecaton in their essays on Ends as the Chief Good. And again, to live according to virtue is the same thing as living according to one's experience of these things which happen by nature; as Chrysippus explains it in the first book of his treatise on the Chief Good. For our individual natures are all parts of universal nature; on which account the chief good is to live in a manner corresponding to nature, and that means corresponding to one's own nature and to universal nature; doing none of those things which the common law of mankind is in the habit of forbidding; and that common law is identical with that right reason which pervades everything, being the same with Jupiter, who is the regulator and chief manager of all existing things.

Again, this very thing is the virtue of the happy man and the perfect happiness of life when everything is done according to a harmony with the genius of each individual with reference to the will of the universal governor and manager of all things. Diogenes, accordingly, says expressly that the chief good is to act according to sound reason in our selection of things according to our nature. And Archedemus defines it to be living in the discharge of all becoming duties. Chrysippus again understands that the nature, in a manner corresponding to which we ought to live, is both the common nature, and also human nature in particular; but Cleanthes will not admit of any other nature than the common one alone, as that in a manner corresponding to which people ought to live; and repudiates all mention of a particular nature. And he asserts that virtue is a disposition of the mind always consistent and always harmonious; that one ought to seek it out for its own sake, without being influenced by fear or hope or any external influence. Moreover, that it is in it that happiness consists, as producing in the soul the harmony of a life always consistent with itself; and that if a rational animal goes the wrong way, it is because it allows itself to be misled by the deceitful appearances of exterior things, or perhaps by the instigation of those who surround it; for nature herself never gives us any but good inclinations.

LIV. Now virtue is, to speak generally, a perfection in everything, as in the case of a statue; whether it is invisible as good health, or speculative as prudence. For Hecaton says, in the first book of his treatise on Virtues, that the scientific and speculative virtues are those which have a constitution arising from speculation and study, as, for instance, prudence and justice; and that those which are not speculative are those which are generally viewed in their extension as a practical result or effect of the former; such for instance, as health and strength. Accordingly, temperance is one of the speculative virtues, and it happens that good health usually follows it, and is marshalled as it were beside it; in the same way as strength follows the proper structure of an arch. — And the unspeculative virtues derive their name from the fact of their not proceeding from any acquiescence reflected

by intelligence; but they are derived from others, are only accessories, and are found even in worthless people, as in the case of good health, or courage. And Posidonius, in the first book of his treaties on Ethics, says that the great proof of the reality of virtue is that Socrates, and Diogenes, and Antisthenes made great improvement; and the great proof of the reality of vice may be found in the fact of its being opposed to virtue.

Again, Chrysippus, in the first book of his treatise on the Chief Good, and Cleanthes, and also Posidonius in his Exhortations, and Hecaton, all agree that virtue may be taught. And that they are right, and that it may be taught, is plain from men becoming good after having been bad. On this account Panætius teaches that there are two virtues, one speculative and the other practical; but others make three kinds, the logical, the natural, and the ethical. Posidonius divides virtue into four divisions; and Cleanthes, Chrysippus, and Antipater make the divisions more numerous still; for Apollophanes asserts that there is but one virtue, namely, prudence.

Among the virtues some are primitive and some are derived. The primitive ones are prudence, manly courage, justice, and temperance. And subordinate to these, as a kind of species contained in them, are magnanimity, continence, endurance, presence of mind, wisdom in council. And the Stoics define prudence as a knowledge of what is good, and bad, and indifferent; justice as a knowledge of what ought to be chosen, what ought to be avoided, and what is indifferent; magnanimity as a knowledge of engendering a lofty habit, superior to all such accidents as happen to all men indifferently, whether they be good or bad; continence they consider a disposition which never abandons right reason, or a habit which never yields to pleasure; endurance they call a knowledge or habit by which we understand what we ought to endure, what we ought not, and what is indifferent; presence of mind they define as a habit which is prompt at finding out what is suitable on a sudden emergency; and wisdom in counsel they think a knowledge which leads us to judge what we are to do, and how we are to do it, in order to act becomingly. And analogously, of vices too there are some which are primary, and some which

are subordinate; as, for instance, folly, and cowardice, and injustice, and intemperance are among the primary vices; incontinence, slowness, and folly in counsel among the subordinate ones. And the vices are ignorance of those things of which the virtues are the knowledge.

LV. Good, looked at in a general way, is some advantage, with the more particular distinction, being partly what is actually useful, partly what is not contrary to utility. On which account virtue itself, and the good which partakes of virtue are spoken of in a threefold view of the subject. First, as to what kind of good it is, and from what it ensues; as, for instance, in an action done according to virtue. Secondly, as to the agent, in the case of a good man who partakes of virtue.[1] . . .

At another time, they define the good in a peculiar manner, as being what is perfect according to the nature of a rational being as rational being. And, secondly, they say that it is conformity to virtue, so that all actions which partake of virtue, and all good men, are themselves in some sense the good. And in the third place, they speak of its accessories, joy, and mirth, and things of that kind. In the same manner they speak of vices, which they divide into folly, cowardice, injustice, and things of that kind. And they consider that those things which partake of vices, and actions done according to vice, and bad men, are themselves in some sense the evil; and its accessories are despondency, and melancholy, and other things of that kind.

LVI. Again, of goods, some have reference to the mind, and some are external; and some neither have reference to the mind, nor are external. The goods having reference to the mind are virtues, and actions according to the virtues. The external goods are the having a virtuous country, a virtuous friend, and the happiness of one's country and friend. And those which are not external, and which have no reference to the mind, are such as a man's being virtuous and happy to himself. And reciprocally, of evils, some have reference to the mind, such as the vices and actions according to them; some are external, such as having a foolish country, or a foolish friend, or one's country or one's

[1] The third point of view is wanting.

friend being unhappy. And those evils which are not external, and which have no reference to the mind, are such as a man's being worthless and unhappy to himself.

LVII. Again, of goods, some are final, some are efficient, and some are both final and efficient. For instance, a friend, and the services done by him to one, are efficient goods; but courage, and prudence, and liberty, and delight, and mirth, and freedom from pain, and all kinds of actions done according to virtue, are final goods. There are too, as I said before, some goods which are both efficient and final; for inasmuch as they produce perfect happiness they are efficient, and inasmuch as they complete it by being themselves parts of it, they are final. And in the same way, of evils, some are final, and some efficient, and some partake of both natures. For instance, an enemy and the injuries done to one by him, are efficient evils; fear, meanness of condition, slavery, want of delight, depression of spirits, excessive grief, and all actions done according to vice, are final evils; and some partake of both characters, since, inasmuch as they produce perfect unhappiness, they are efficient; and inasmuch as they complete it in such a way as to become parts of it, they are final.

LVIII. Again, of the goods which have reference to the mind, some are habits, some are dispositions, and some are neither habits nor dispositions. Dispositions are virtues, habits are practices, and those which are neither habits nor dispositions are energies. And, speaking generally, the following may be called mixed goods: happiness in one's children, and a happy old age. But knowledge is a pure good. And some goods are continually present, such as virtue; and some are not always present, as joy, or taking a walk.

LIX. But every good is expedient, and necessary, and profitable, and useful, and serviceable, and beautiful, and advantageous, and eligible, and just. Expedient, inasmuch as it brings us things, which by their happening to us do us good; necessary, inasmuch as it assists us in what we have need to be assisted; profitable, inasmuch as it repays all the care that is expended on it, and makes a return with interest to our great advantage; useful, inasmuch as it supplies us with what is of utility; serviceable,

because it does us service which is much praised; beautiful, because it is in accurate proportion to the need we have of it, and to the service it does; advantageous, inasmuch as it is of such a character as to confer advantage on us; eligible, because it is such that we may rationally choose it; and just, because it is in accordance with law, and is an efficient cause of union.

And they call the honourable the perfect good, because it has naturally all the numbers which are required by nature, and because it discloses a perfect harmony. Now, the species of this perfect good are four in number: justice, manly courage, temperance, and knowledge; for in these goods all beautiful actions have their accomplishment. And analogously, there are also four species of the disgraceful: injustice, and cowardice, and intemperance, and folly. And the honourable is predicated in one sense, as making those who are possessed of it worthy of all praise; and in a second sense, it is used of what is well adapted by nature for its proper work; and in another sense when it expresses that which adorns a man, as when we say that the wise man alone is good and honourable.

The Stoics also say, that the beautiful is the only good, as Hecaton says, in the third book of his treatise on Goods, and Chrysippus asserts the same principle in his essays on the Beautiful. And they say that this is virtue, and that which partakes of virtue; and this assertion is equal to the other, that everything good is beautiful, and that the good is an equivalent term to the beautiful, inasmuch as the one thing is exactly equal to the other. For since it is good, it is beautiful; and it is beautiful, therefore, it is good.

LX. But it seems that all goods are equal, and that every good is to be desired in the highest degree, and that it admits of no relaxation, and of no extension. Moreover, they divide all existing things into good, bad, and indifferent. The good are the virtues, prudence, justice, manly courage, temperance, and the rest of the like qualities. The bad are the contraries, folly, injustice, and the like. Those are indifferent which are neither beneficial nor injurious, such as life, health, pleasure, beauty, strength, riches, a good reputation, nobility of birth; and their contraries, death,

disease, labour, disgrace, weakness, poverty, a bad reputation, baseness of birth, and the like; as Hecaton lays it down in the seventh book of his treatise on the Chief Good; and he is followed by Apollodorus, in his Ethics, and by Chrysippus. For they affirm that those things are not good but indifferent, though perhaps a little nearer to one species than to the other.

For, as it is the property of heat to warm and not to chill one, so it is the property of the good to benefit and not to injure one. Now, wealth and good health cannot be said to benefit any more than to injure any one: therefore, neither wealth nor good health are goods. Again, they say that that thing is not good which it is possible to use both well and ill. But it is possible to make either a good or a bad use of wealth, or of health; therefore, wealth and good health are not goods. Posidonius, however, affirms that these things do come under the head of goods. But Hecaton, in the nineteenth book of his treatise on Goods, and Chrysippus, in his treatises on Pleasure, both deny that pleasure is a good. For they say that there are disgraceful pleasures, and that nothing disgraceful is good. And that to benefit a person is to move him or to keep him according to virtue, but to injure him is to move him or to keep him according to vice.

They also assert that things indifferent are thus spoken of in a twofold manner; firstly, those things are called so, which have no influence in producing either happiness or unhappiness, such for instance, as riches, glory, health, strength, and the like; for it is possible for a man to be happy without any of these things; and also, it is upon the nature of the use that is made of them, that happiness or unhappiness depends. In another sense, those things are called indifferent, which do not excite any inclination or aversion, as for instance, the fact of a man's having an odd or an even number of hairs on his head, or his putting out or drawing back his finger; for it is not in this sense that the things previously mentioned are called indifferent, for they do excite inclination or aversion. On which account some of them are chosen, though there is equal reason for preferring or shunning all the others.

LXI. Again, of things indifferent, they call some preferred

(προηγμένα), and others rejected (ἀποπροηγμένα). Those are preferred, which have some proper value (ἀξιάν), and those are rejected, which have no value at all (ἀπαξιάν ἔχοντα). And by the term proper value, they mean that quality of things, which causes them to concur in producing a well-regulated life; and in this sense, every good has a proper value. Again, they say that a thing has value, when in some point of view, it has a sort of intermediate power of aiding us to live conformably to nature; and under this class, we may range riches or good health, if they give any assistance to natural life. Again, value is predicated of the price which one gives for the attainment of an object, which some one who has experience of the object sought fixes as its fair price; as if we were to say, for instance, that as some wheat was to be exchanged for barley, with a mule being thrown in to make up the difference. Those goods then are preferred, which have a value, as in the case of the mental goods, ability, skill, improvement, and the like; and in the case of the corporeal goods, life, health, strength, a good constitution, soundness, beauty; and in the case of external goods, riches, glory, nobility of birth, and the like.

Rejected things are, in the case of qualities of the mind, stupidity, unskilfulness, and the like; in the case of circumstances affecting the body, death, disease, weakness, a bad constitution, mutilation, disgrace, and the like; in the case of external circumstances, poverty, want of reputation, ignoble birth, and the like. But those qualities and circumstances which are indifferent, are neither preferred nor rejected. Again, of things preferred, some are preferred for their own sakes, some for the sake of other things, and some partly for their own sakes and partly for that of other things. Those which are preferred for their own sakes, are ability, improvement, and the like; those which are preferred for the sake of other things, are wealth, nobility of birth, and the like; those which are preferred partly for their own sake, and partly for that of something else, are strength, vigour of the senses, universal soundness, and the like; for they are preferred, for their own sakes, inasmuch as they are in accordance with nature, and for the sake of something else, inasmuch as they are

productive of no small number of advantages; and the same is the case in the inverse ratio, with those things which are rejected.

LXII. Again, they say that that is duty, which is preferred, and which contains in itself reasonable arguments why we should prefer it; as for instance, its corresponding to the nature of life itself. Also this argument extends to plants and animals, for even their nature is subject to the obligation of certain duties. And duty (τὸ καθῆκον) had this name given to it by Zeno, in the first instance, its appellation being derived from its coming to, or according to some people, ἀπὸ τοῦ κατά τινας ἥκειν; and its effect is something kindred to the preparations made by nature. Now of the things done according to inclination, some are duties, and some are contrary to duty; and some are neither duties nor contrary to duty. Those are duties, which reason selects to do, as for instance, to honour one's parents, one's brothers, one's country, to gratify one's friends. Those actions are contrary to duty, which reason does not choose; as for instance, to neglect one's parents, to be indifferent to one's brothers, to shirk assisting one's friends, to be careless about the welfare of one's country, and so on. Those are neither duties, nor contrary to duty, which reason neither selects to do, nor, on the other hand, repudiates; such actions, for instance, as to pick up straw, to hold a pen, or a comb, or things of that sort.

Again, there are some duties which do not depend on circumstances, and some which do. These do not depend on circumstances, to take care of one's health, and of the sound state of one's senses, and the like. Those which do depend on circumstances, are the mutilation of one's members, the sacrificing of one's property, and so on. And the case of those actions which are contrary to duty, is similar. Again, of duties, some are always duties, and some are not always such. What is always a duty, is to live in accordance with virtue; but to ask questions, to give answers, to walk, and the like, are not always duties. And the same statement holds good with respect to acts contrary to duty.

There is also a class of intermediate duties, such as the duty of boys obeying their masters.

LXIII. The Stoics also say that the mind is divisible into eight

parts; for that the five organs of sensation, and the vocal power, and the intellectual power which is the mind itself, and the generative power are all parts of the mind. But by error, there is produced a perversion which operates on the intellect, from which many perturbations arise, and many causes of inconstancy. And all perturbation is itself, according to Zeno, a movement of the mind, or superfluous inclination, which is irrational, and contrary to nature. Moreover, of the superior class of perturbations, as Hecaton says, in the second book of his treatise on the Passions, and as Zeno also says in his work on the Passions, there are four kinds, grief, fear, desire, and pleasure. And they consider that these perturbations are judgments, as Chrysippus contends in his work on the Passions; for covetousness is an opinion that money is a beautiful object; and in like manner drunkenness and intemperance, and other things of the sort, are judgments. And grief they define to be an irrational contraction of the mind, and divide it into the following species, pity, envy, emulation, jealousy, pain, perturbation, sorrow, anguish, confusion. Pity is a grief over some one, on the ground of his being in undeserved distress. Envy is a grief, at the good fortune of another. Emulation is a grief at that belonging to some one else, which one desires one's self. Jealousy is a grief at another also having what one has one's self. Pain is a grief which weighs one down. Perturbation is grief which narrows one, and causes one to feel in a strait. Sorrow is a grief arising from deliberate thought, which endures for some time, and gradually increases. Anguish is a grief with acute pain. Confusion is an irrational grief, which frets one, and prevents one from clearly discerning present circumstances. But fear is the expectation of evil; and the following feelings are all classed under the head of fear: apprehension, hesitation, shame, perplexity, trepidation, and anxiety. Apprehension is a fear which produces alarm. Shame is a fear of discredit. Hesitation is a fear of coming activity. Perplexity is a fear, from the imagination of some unusual thing. Trepidation is a fear accompanied with an oppression of the voice. Anxiety is a fear of some uncertain event.

Again, desire is an irrational appetite; to which head, the following feelings are referrible: want, hatred, contentiousness,

anger, love, enmity, rage. Want is a desire arising from our not having something or other, and is, as it were, separated from the thing, but is still stretching, and attracted towards it in vain. And hatred is a desire that it should be ill with some one, accompanied with a certain continual increase and extension. Contentiousness is a certain desire accompanied with deliberate choice. Anger is a desire of revenge, on a person who appears to have injured one in an unbecoming way. Love is a desire not conversant about a virtuous object, for it is an attempt to conciliate affection, because of some beauty which is seen. Enmity is a certain anger of long duration, and full of hatred, and it is a watchful passion, as is shown in the following lines: —

> For though we deem the short-liv'd fury past,
> 'T is sure the mighty will revenge at last.[1]

But rage is anger at its commencement.

Again, pleasure is an irrational elation of the mind over something which appears to be desirable; and its different species are enjoyment, rejoicing at evil, delight, and extravagant joy. Enjoyment now, is a pleasure which charms the mind through the ears. Rejoicing at evil (ἐπιχαιρεκακία) is a pleasure which arises at the misfortunes of others. Delight (τέρψις), that is to say turning (τρέψις), is a certain turning of the soul (προτροπή τις ψυχῆς) to softness. Extravagant joy is the dissolution of virtue. And as there are said to be some sicknesses (ἀῤῥωστήματα) in the body, as, for instance, gout and arthritic disorders; so too there are diseases of the soul, such as a fondness for glory, or for pleasure, and other feelings of that sort. For an ἀῤῥώστημα is a disease accompanied with weakness; and a disease is an opinion of something which appears exceedingly desirable. And, as in the case of the body, there are illnesses to which people are especially liable, such as colds or diarrhœa; so also are there propensities which the mind is under the influence of, such as enviousness, pitifulness, quarrelsomeness, and so on.

There are also three good dispositions of the mind: joy, caution, and will. And joy they say is the opposite of pleasure, since it is a rational elation of the mind; so caution is the opposite of

[1] Homer's *Iliad*, i. 81. Pope's Version, l. 105.

fear, being a rational avoidance of anything, for the wise man will never be afraid, but he will act with caution; and will, they define as the opposite of desire, since it is a rational wish. As therefore some things fall under the class of the first perturbations, in the same manner do some things fall under the class of the first good dispositions. And accordingly, under the head of will are classed goodwill, placidity, salutation, affection; and under the head of caution are ranged reverence and modesty; under the head of joy, we speak of delight, mirth, and good spirits.

LXIV. They say also, that the wise man is free from perturbations, because he has no strong propensities. But that this freedom from propensities also exists in the bad man, being, however, then quite another thing, inasmuch as it proceeds in him only from the hardness and unimpressibility of his nature. They also pronounce the wise man free from vanity, since he regards with equal eye what is glorious and what is inglorious. At the same time, they admit that there is another character devoid of vanity, who, however, is only reckoned one of the rash men, being in fact the bad man. They also say that all the virtuous men are austere, because they do never speak with reference to pleasure, nor do they listen to what is said by others with reference to pleasure. At the same time they call another man austere too, using the term in nearly the same sense as they do when they speak of austere wine which is used in compounding medicines but not for drinking.

They also pronounce the wise to be honest-hearted men, anxiously attending to those matters which may make them better, by means of some principle which conceals what is bad, and brings to light what is good. Nor is there any hypocrisy about them; for they cut off all pretence in their voice and appearance. They also keep aloof from business; for they guard carefully against doing any thing contrary to their duty. They drink wine, but they do not get drunk; and they never yield to frenzy. Occasionally extraordinary imaginations may obtain a momentary power over them, owing to some melancholy or trifling, arising not according to the principle of what is desirable, but contrary to nature. Nor, again, will the wise man feel grief; because grief

is an irrational contraction of the soul, as Apollodorus defines it in his Ethics.

They are also, as they say, godlike; for they have something in them which is as it were a God. But the bad man is an atheist. Now there are two kinds of atheists; one who speaks in a spirit of hostility to, and the other, who utterly disregards, the divine nature; but they admit that all bad men are not atheists in this last sense. The good, on the contrary, are pious; for they have a thorough acquaintance with the laws respecting the Gods. And piety is a knowledge of the proper reverence and worship due to the Gods. Moreover they sacrifice to the Gods, and keep themselves pure; for they avoid all offences having reference to the Gods, and the Gods admire them; for they are holy and just in all that concerns the Deity; and the wise men are the only priests, for they consider the matters relating to sacrifices, and the erection of temples, and purifications, and all other things which peculiarly concern the Gods. They also pronounce that men are bound to honour their parents, and their brethren, in the second place after the Gods. They also say that parental affection for one's children is natural to them, and is a feeling which does not exist in bad men. And they lay down the position that all offences are equal, as Chrysippus argues in the fourth book of his Ethic Questions, and so say Persæus and Zeno. For if one thing that is true is not more true than another thing that is true, neither is one thing that is false more false than another thing that is false; so too, one deceit is not greater than another, nor one sin than another. For the man who is a hundred furlongs from Canopus, and the man who is only one, are both equally not in Canopus; and so too, he who commits a greater sin, and he who commits a less, are both equally not in the right path.

Heraclides of Tarsus, indeed, the friend of Antipater, of Tarsus, and Athenodorus, both assert that offences are not equal.

Again, the Stoics, as for instance, Chrysippus, in the first book of his work on Lives, say, that the wise man will take a part in the affairs of the state, if nothing hinders him. For that he will restrain vice, and excite men to virtue. Also, they say that he will

marry, as Zeno says in his Republic, and beget children. Moreover, that the wise man will never form mere opinions, that is to say, he will never agree to anything that is false; and that he will become a Cynic; for that Cynicism is a short path to virtue, as Apollodorus calls it in his Ethics; that he will even eat human flesh, if there should be occasion; that he is the only free man, and that the bad are slaves; for that freedom is a power of independent action, but slavery a deprivation of the same. That there is, besides, another slavery, which consists in subjection, and a third which consists in possession and subjection; the contrary of which is masterhood, which is likewise bad.

And they say, that not only are the wise free, but that they are also kings, since kingly power is an irresponsible dominion, which can only exist in the case of the wise man, as Chrysippus says in his treatise on the Proper Application of his Terms made by Zeno; for he says that a ruler ought to give decisions on good and evil, and that none of the wicked understand these things. In the same way, they assert that they are the only people who are fit to be magistrates or judges or orators, and that none of the bad are qualified for these tasks. Moreover, they say that they are free from all error, in consequence of not being prone to any wrong actions; also, that they are unconnected with injury, for that they never injure any one else, nor themselves. They also affirm that they are not pitiful, and never make allowance for any one; for that they do not relax the punishments appointed by law, since yielding, and pity, and mercifulness itself, never exist in any of their souls, so as to induce an affectation of kindness in respect of punishment; nor do they ever think any punishment too severe. Again, they say that the wise man never wonders at any of the things which appear extraordinary, as for instance, at the stories about Charon, or the ebbing of the tide, or the springs of hot water, or the bursting forth of flames. But, say they further, the wise man will not live in solitude, for he is by nature sociable and practical. Accordingly, he will take exercise for the sake of hardening and invigorating his body. And the wise man will pray, asking good things from the Gods, as Posidonius says in the first book of his treatise on Duties, and Hecaton

says the same thing in the thirteenth book of his treatise on Extraordinary Things.

They also say, that friendship exists in the virtuous alone, on account of their resemblance to one another. And they describe friendship itself as a certain communion of the things which concern life, since we use our friends as ourselves. And they assert that a friend is desirable for his own sake, and that a number of friends is a good; and that among the wicked there is no such thing as friendship, and that no wicked man can have a friend.

Again, they say that all the foolish are mad; for that they are not prudent, and that madness is equivalent to folly in every one of its actions; but that the wise man does everything properly, just as we say that Ismenias can play every piece of flute-music well. Also, they say that everything belongs to the wise man, for that the law has given them perfect and universal power; but some things also are said to belong to the wicked, just in the same manner as some things are said to belong to the unjust, or as a house is said to belong to a city in a different sense from that in which a thing belongs to the person who uses it.

LXV. And they say that virtues reciprocally follow one another, and that he who has one has all; for that the precepts of them all are common, as Chrysippus affirms in the first book of his treatise on Laws; and Apollodorus, in his Natural Philosophy, according to the ancient system; and Hecaton, in the third book of his treatise on Virtues. For they say that the man who is endued with virtue, is able to consider and also to do what must be done. But what must be done must be chosen, and encountered, and distributed, and awaited; so that if the man does some things by deliberate choice, and some in a spirit of endurance, and some distributively, and some patiently, he is prudent, and courageous, and just, and temperate. And each of the virtues has a particular subject of its own, about which it is conversant: as, for instance, courage is conversant about the things which must be endured; prudence is conversant about what must be done and what must not, and what is of a neutral or indifferent character. And in like manner, the other virtues are conversant about their own peculiar subjects; and wisdom in counsel and

shrewdness follow prudence; and good order and decorum follow temperance; and equality and goodness of judgment follow justice; and constancy and energy follow courage.

Another doctrine of the Stoics is, that there is nothing intermediate between virtue and vice; while the Peripatetics assert that there is a stage between virtue and vice, being an improvement on vice which has not yet arrived at virtue. For the Stoics say, that as a stick must be either straight or crooked, so a man must be either just or unjust, and cannot be more just than just, or more unjust than unjust; and that the same rule applies to all cases. Moreover, Chrysippus is of opinion that virtue can be lost, but Cleanthes affirms that it cannot; the one saying that it can be lost by drunkenness or melancholy, the other maintaining that it cannot be lost on account of the firm perceptions which it implants in men. They also pronounce it a proper object of choice; accordingly, we are ashamed of actions which we do improperly, while we are aware that what is honourable is the only good. Again, they affirm that it is of itself sufficient for happiness, as Zeno says, and he is followed in this assertion by Chrysippus in the first book of his treatise on Virtues, and by Hecaton in the second book of his treatise on Goods.

"For if," says he, "magnanimity be sufficient of itself to enable us to act in a manner superior to all other men; and if that is a part of virtue, then virtue is of itself sufficient for happiness, despising all things which seem troublesome to it." However, Panætius and Posidonius do not admit that virtue has this sufficiency of itself, but say that there is also need of good health, and competency, and strength. And their opinion is that a man exercises virtue in everything, as Cleanthes asserts, for it cannot be lost; and the virtuous man on every occasion exercises his soul, which is in a state of perfection.

LXVI. Again, they say that justice exists by nature, and not because of any definition or principle; just as law does, or right reason, as Chrysippus tells us in his treatise on the Beautiful; and they think that one ought not to abandon philosophy on account of the different opinions prevailing among philosophers, since on this principle one would wholly quit life, as Posidonius

argues in his Exhortatory Essays. Another doctrine of Chrysippus is, that general learning is very useful.

And the School in general maintain that there are no obligations of justice binding on us with reference to other animals, on account of their dissimilarity to us, as Chrysippus asserts in the first book of his treatise on Justice, and the same opinion is maintained by Posidonius in the first book of his treatise on Duty. They say too, that the wise man will love those young men, who by their outward appearance, show a natural aptitude for virtue; and this opinion is advanced by Zeno, in his Republic, and by Chrysippus in the first book of his work on Lives, and by Apollodorus in his Ethics. And they describe love as an endeavour to benefit a friend on account of his visible beauty; and that it is an attribute not of acquaintanceship, but of friendship. Accordingly, that Thrasmides, although he had his mistress in his power, abstained from her, because he was hated by her. Love, therefore, according to them is a part of friendship, as Chrysippus asserts in his essay on Love; and it is not blameable. Moreover, beauty is the flower of virtue.

And as there are three kinds of lives: the theoretical, the practical, and the logical; they say that the last is the one which ought to be chosen. For that a logical, that is a rational, animal was made by nature on purpose for speculation and action. And they say that a wise man will very rationally take himself out of life, either for the sake of his country or of his friends, or if he be in bitter pain, or under the affliction of mutilation, or incurable disease. . . .

They affirm too, that the best of political constitutions is a mixed one, combined of democracy, and kingly power, and aristocracy. And they say many things of this sort, and more too, in their Ethical Dogmas, and they maintain them by suitable explanations and arguments. But this may be enough for us to say of their doctrines on this head by way of summary, and taking them in an elementary manner.

EPICURUS

(341-270)

From DIOGENES LAERTIUS' LIVES AND OPINIONS OF EMINENT PHILOSOPHERS

Translated from the Greek by
CHARLES D. YONGE

BOOK X. THE EPICUREAN ETHICS

EPICURUS TO MENOECEUS, GREETING

XXVII. "LET no one delay to study philosophy while he is young, and when he is old let him not become weary of the study; for no man can ever find the time unsuitable or too late to study the health of his soul. And he who asserts either that it is not yet time to philosophize, or that the hour is passed, is like a man who should say that the time is not yet come to be happy, or that it is too late. So that both young and old should study philosophy, the one in order that, when he is old, he may be young in good things through the pleasing recollection of the past, and the other in order that he may be at the same time both young and old, in consequence of his absence of fear for the future.

"It is right then for a man to consider the things which produce happiness, since, if happiness is present, we have everything, and when it is absent, we do everything with a view to possess it. Now, what I have constantly recommended to you, these things I would have you do and practise, considering them to be the elements of living well. First of all, believe that God is a being incorruptible and happy, as the common opinion of the world about God dictates; and attach to your idea of him nothing which is inconsistent with incorruptibility or with happiness; and think that he is invested with everything which is able to preserve to him this happiness, in conjunction with incorruptibility. For there are Gods; though our knowledge of them is indis-

tinct. But they are not of the character which people in general attribute to them; for they do not pay a respect to them which accords with the ideas that they entertain of them. And that man is not impious who discards the Gods believed in by the many, but he who applies to the Gods the opinions entertained of them by the many. For the assertions of the many about the Gods are not anticipations (προλήψεις), but false opinions (ὑπολήψεις). And in consequence of these, the greatest evils which befall wicked men, and the benefits which are conferred on the good, are all attributed to the Gods; for they connect all their ideas of them with a comparison of human virtues, and everything which is different from human qualities, they regard as incompatible with the divine nature.

"Accustom yourself also to think death a matter with which we are not at all concerned, since all good and all evil is in sensation, and since death is only the privation of sensation. On which account, the correct knowledge of the fact that death is no concern of ours, makes the mortality of life pleasant to us, inasmuch as it sets forth no illimitable time, but relieves us from the longing for immortality. For there is nothing terrible in living to a man who rightly comprehends that there is nothing terrible in ceasing to live; so that he was a silly man who said that he feared death, not because it would grieve him when it was present, but because it did grieve him while it was future. For it is very absurd that that which does not distress a man when it is present, should afflict him when only expected. Therefore, the most formidable of all evils, death, is nothing to us, since, when we exist, death is not present to us; and when death is present, then we have no existence. It is no concern then either of the living or of the dead; since to the one it has no existence, and the other class has no existence itself. But people in general at times flee from death as the greatest of evils, and at times wish for it as a rest from the evils in life. Nor is the not living a thing feared, since living is not connected with it; nor does the wise man think not living an evil; but, just as he chooses food, not preferring that which is most abundant, but that which is nicest; so too, he enjoys time, not measuring it as to whether it is of the greatest

length, but as to whether it is most agreeable. And he who enjoins a young man to live well, and an old man to die well, is a simpleton, not only because of the constantly delightful nature of life, but also because the care to live well is identical with the care to die well. And he was still more wrong who said: —

"'T is well to taste of life, and then when born
To pass with quickness to the shades below.[1]

"For if this really was his opinion why did he not quit life? for it was easily in his power to do so, if it really was his belief. But if he was joking, then he was talking foolishly in a case where it ought not to be allowed; and, we must recollect, that the future is not our own, nor, on the other hand, is it wholly not our own, I mean so that we can never altogether await it with a feeling of certainty that it will be, nor altogether despair of it as what will never be. And we must consider that some of the passions are natural, and some empty; and of the natural ones some are necessary, and some merely natural. And of the necessary ones some are necessary to happiness, and others necessary that the body may be exempt from trouble, and others, in order that life itself may exist; for a correct theory with regard to these things can refer all choice and avoidance to the health of the body and the freedom from disquietude of the soul, since this is the end of living happily. For it is for the sake of this that we do everything, wishing to avoid grief and fear; and when once this is the case, with respect to us, then the storm of the soul is, as I may say, put an end to; since the animal is unable to go as if to something deficient, and to seek something different from that by which the good of the soul and body will be perfected.

"For then we have need of pleasure when we grieve, because pleasure is not present; but when we do not grieve, then we have no need of pleasure; and on this account, we affirm, that pleasure is the beginning and end of living happily; for we have recognized this as the first good, being connate with us; and it is with reference to it that we begin every choice and avoidance; and to this we come as if we judged of all good by passion as the standard; and, since this is the first good and connate with us,

[1] This quotation is from Theognis.

on this account we do not choose every pleasure, but at times we pass over many pleasures when any difficulty is likely to ensue from them; and we think many pains better than pleasures, when a greater pleasure follows them, if we endure the pain for a time.

"Every pleasure is therefore a good on account of its own nature, but it does not follow that every pleasure is worthy of being chosen; just as every pain is an evil, and yet every pain must not be avoided. But it is right to estimate all these things by the measurement and view of what is suitable and unsuitable; for at times we may feel the good as an evil, and at times, on the contrary, we may feel the evil as good. And we think contentment a great good, not in order that we may never have but a little, but in order that, if we have not much, we may make use of a little, being genuinely persuaded that those men enjoy luxury most completely who are the best able to do without it; and that everything which is natural is easily provided, and what is useless is not easily procured. And simple flavours give as much pleasure as costly fare, when everything that can give pain, and every feeling of want, is removed; and corn and water give the most extreme pleasure when any one in need eats them. To accustom one's self, therefore, to simple and inexpensive habits is a great ingredient in the perfecting of health, and makes a man free from hesitation with respect to the necessary uses of life. And when we on certain occasions fall in with more sumptuous fare, it makes us in a better disposition toward it, and renders us fearless with respect to fortune. When, therefore, we say that pleasure is a chief good, we are not speaking of the pleasures of the debauched man, or those which lie in sensual enjoyment, as some think who are ignorant, and who do not entertain our opinions, or else interpret them perversely; but we mean the freedom of the body from pain, and of the soul from confusion. For it is not continued drinkings and revels, or the enjoyment of female society, or feasts of fish and other such things, as a costly table supplies, that make life pleasant, but sober contemplation, which examines into the reasons for all choice and avoidance, and which puts to flight the vain opinions from which the greater part of the confusion arises which troubles the soul.

"Now, the beginning and the greatest good of all these things is prudence, on which account prudence is something more valuable than even philosophy, inasmuch as all the other virtues spring from it, teaching us that it is not possible to live pleasantly unless one also lives prudently, and honourably, and justly; and that one cannot live prudently, and honestly, and justly, without living pleasantly; for the virtues are connate with living agreeably, and living agreeably is inseparable from the virtues. Since, who can you think better than that man who has holy opinions respecting the Gods, and who is utterly fearless with respect to death, and who has properly contemplated the end of nature, and who comprehends that the chief good is easily perfected and easily provided; and the greatest evil lasts but a short period, and causes but brief pain. And who has no belief in necessity, which is set up by some as the mistress of all things, but he refers some things to fortune, some to ourselves, because necessity is an irresponsible power, and because he sees that fortune is unstable, while our own will is free; and this freedom constitutes, in our case, a responsibility which makes us encounter blame and praise. Since it would be better to follow the fables about the Gods than to be a slave to the fate of the natural philosopher; for the fables are sketched as if it were possible to avert the wrath of God by paying him honour; but the other presents us with a necessity which is inexorable.

"And he, not thinking fortune a goddess, as the generality esteem her (for nothing is done at random by a god), nor a cause which no man can rely on, for he thinks that good or evil is not given by her to men so as to make them live happily, but that the principles of great goods or great evils are supplied by her; thinking it better to be unfortunate in accordance with reason, than to be fortunate irrationally; for that those actions which are judged to be the best, are rightly done in consequence of reason.

"Do you then study these precepts, and those which are akin to them, by all means day and night, pondering on them by yourself, and discussing them with any one like yourself, and then you will never be disturbed by either sleeping or waking fancies,

but you will live like a god among men; for a man living amid immortal gods, is in no respect like a mortal being."

In other works, he discards divination; and also in his Little Epitome. And he says divination has no existence; but, if it has any, still we should think that what happens according to it is nothing to us.

These are his sentiments about the things which concern the life of man, and he has discussed them at greater length elsewhere.

XXVIII. Now, he differs with the Cyrenaics about pleasure. For they do not admit that to be pleasure which exists as a condition, but place it wholly in motion. He, however, admits both kinds to be pleasure, namely, that of the soul, and that of the body, as he says in his treatise on Choice and Avoidance; and also in his work on the Chief Good; and in the first book of his treatise on Lives, and in his Letter against the Mitylenian Philosophers. And in the same spirit, Diogenes [of Tarsus], in the seventeenth book of his Select Discourses, and Metrodorus, in his Timocrates, speak thus: "But when pleasure is understood, I mean both that which exists in motion, and that which is a state. . . ." And Epicurus, in his treatise on Choice, speaks thus: "Now, freedom from disquietude, and freedom from pain, are states of pleasure; but joy and cheerfulness are beheld in motion and energy."

XXIX. For they make out the pains of the body to be worse than those of the mind; accordingly, those who do wrong are punished in the body. But he considers the pains of the soul the worst; for that the flesh is only sensible to present affliction, but the soul feels the past, the present, and the future. Therefore, in the same manner, he contends that the pleasures of the soul are greater than those of the body; and he uses as a proof that pleasure is the chief good, the fact that all animals from the moment of their birth are delighted with pleasure, and are offended with pain by their natural instinct, and without the employment of reason. Therefore, too, we, of our own inclination, flee from pain; so that Hercules, when devoured by his poisoned tunic, cries out —

Shouting and groaning; and the rocks around
Reëchoed his sad wails, the mountain heights
Of Locrian lands, and sad Eubœa's hills.[1]

XXX. And we choose the virtues for the sake of pleasure, and not on their own account; just as we seek the skill of the physician for the sake of health, as Diogenes says, in the twentieth book of his Select Discourses, where he also calls virtue a way of passing one's life (διαγωγή). But Epicurus says, that virtue alone is inseparable from pleasure, but that everything else may be separated from it as mortal.

Maxims of Epicurus

XXXI. Let us, however, now add the finishing stroke, as one may say, to this whole treatise, and to the life of the philosopher; giving some of his fundamental maxims, and closing the whole work with them, taking that for our end which is the beginning of happiness.

1. "That which is happy and imperishable, neither has trouble itself, nor does it cause such to anything; so that it is not subject to the feelings of either anger or gratitude; for these feelings only exist in what is weak.

(In other passages he says that the Gods are speculated on by reason, some existing according to number, and others according to some similarity of form, arising from the continual flowing on of similar images, perfected for this very purpose in human form.)

2. "Death is nothing to us: for that which is dissolved is devoid of sensation; but that which is devoid of sensation is nothing to us.

3. "The limit of the greatness of the pleasures is the removal of everything which can give pain. And where pleasure is, as long as it lasts, that which gives pain, or that which feels pain, or both of them, are absent.

4. "Pain does not abide continuously in the flesh, but in its extremity it is present only a very short time. That pain which only just exceeds the pleasure in the flesh, does not last many days. But long diseases have in them more that is pleasant than painful to the flesh.

[1] From the *Trachiniæ* of Sophocles, 1784.

5. "It is not possible to live pleasantly without living prudently, and honourably, and justly; nor to live prudently, and honourably, and justly, without living pleasantly. But he to whom it does not happen to live prudently, honourably, and justly, cannot possibly live pleasantly.

6. "For the sake of feeling confidence and security with regard to men, and not with reference to the nature of government and kingly power being a good, some men have wished to be eminent and powerful, in order that others might attain this feeling by their means; thinking that so they would secure safety as far as men are concerned. So that, if the life of such men is safe, they have attained to the nature of good; but if it is not safe, then they have failed in obtaining that for the sake of which they originally desired power according to the order of nature.

7. "No pleasure is intrinsically bad; but the efficient causes of some pleasures bring with them a great many perturbations of pleasure.

8. "If every pleasure were condensed, if one may so say, and if each lasted long, and affected the whole body, or the essential parts of it, then there would be no difference between one pleasure and another.

9. "If those things which make the pleasures of debauched men, put an end to the fears of the mind, and to those which arise about the heavenly phenomena, and death, and pain; and if they taught us what ought to be the limit of our desires, we should have no pretence for blaming those who wholly devote themselves to pleasure, and who never feel any pain or grief (which is the chief evil) from any quarter.

10. "If apprehensions relating to the heavenly phenomena did not disturb us, and if the terrors of death did not concern us, and if we had the courage to contemplate the boundaries of pain and of the desires, we should have no need of physiological studies.

11. "It would not be possible for a person to banish all fear about those things which are called most essential, unless he knew what is the nature of the universe, or if he had any idea that the fables told about it could be true; and therefore it is

that a person cannot enjoy unmixed pleasure without physiological knowledge.

12. "It would be no good for a man to secure himself safety as far as men are concerned, while in a state of apprehension as to all the things on high, and those under the earth, and in short, all those in the infinite.

13. "Irresistible power and great wealth may, up to a certain point, give us security as far as men are concerned; but the security of men in general depends upon the tranquillity of their souls, and their freedom from ambition.

14. "The riches of nature are defined and easily procurable; but vain desires are insatiable.

15. "The wise man is but little favoured by fortune; but his reason procures him the greatest and most valuable goods, and these he does enjoy, and will enjoy the whole of his life.

16. "The just man is the freest of all men from disquietude; but the unjust man is a perpetual prey to it.

17. "Pleasure in the flesh is not increased, when once the pain arising from want is removed; it is only diversified.

18. "The most perfect happiness of the soul depends on these reflections, and on opinions of a similar character on all those questions which cause the greatest alarm to the mind.

19. "Infinite and finite time both have equal pleasure, if any one measures its limits by reason.

20. "If the flesh could experience boundless pleasure, it would want to dispose of eternity.

21. "But reason, enabling us to conceive the end and dissolution of the body, and liberating us from the fears relative to eternity, procures for us all the happiness of which life is capable so completely that we have no further occasion to include eternity in our desires. In this disposition of mind man is happy even when his troubles engage him to quit life; and to die thus is for him only to interrupt a life of happiness.

22. "He who is acquainted with the limits of life knows, that that which removes the pain which arises from want, and which makes the whole of life perfect, is easily procurable; so that he has no need of those things which can only be attained with trouble.

23. "But as to the subsisting end, we ought to consider it with all the clearness and evidence which we refer to whatever we think and believe; otherwise, all things will be full of confusion and uncertainty of judgment.

24. "If you resist all the senses, you will not even have anything left to which you can refer, or by which you may be able to judge of the falsehood of the senses which you condemn.

25. "If you simply discard one sense, and do not distinguish between the different elements of the judgment, so as to know on the one hand, the induction which goes beyond the actual sensation, or, on the other, the actual and immediate notion; the affections, and all the conceptions of the mind which lean directly on the sensible representation, you will be imputing trouble into the other sense, and destroying in that quarter every species of criterion.

26. "If you allow equal authority to the ideas, which, being only inductive, require to be verified, and to those which bear about them an immediate certainty, you will not escape error; for you will be confounding doubtful opinions with those which are not doubtful, and true judgments with those of a different character.

27. "If, on every occasion, we do not refer every one of our actions to the chief end of nature, if we turn aside from that to seek or avoid some other object, there will be a want of agreement between our words and our actions.

28. "Of all the things which wisdom provides for the happiness of the whole life, by far the most important is the acquisition of friendship.

29. "The same opinion encourages man to trust that no evil will be everlasting, or even of long duration; as it sees that, in the space of life allotted to us, the protection of friendship is most sure and trustworthy.

30. "Of the desires, some are natural and necessary, some natural, but not necessary, and some are neither natural nor necessary, but owe their existence to vain opinions.

(Epicurus thinks that those are natural and necessary which put an end to pains, as drink when one is thirsty; and that those

are natural but not necessary which only diversify pleasure, but do not remove pain, such as expensive food; and that those are neither natural nor necessary, which are such as crowns, or the erection of statues.)

31. "Those desires which do not lead to pain, if they are not satisfied, are not necessary. It is easy to impose silence on them when they appear difficult to gratify, or likely to produce injury.

32. "When the natural desires, the failing to satisfy which is, nevertheless, not painful, are violent and obstinate, it is a proof that there is an admixture of vain opinion in them; for then energy does not arise from their own nature, but from the vain opinions of men.

33. "Natural justice is a covenant of what is suitable, leading men to avoid injuring one another, and being injured.

34. "Those animals which are unable to enter into an argument of this nature, or to guard against doing or sustaining mutual injury, have no such thing as justice or injustice. And the case is the same with those nations, the members of which are either unwilling or unable to enter into a covenant to respect their mutual interests.

35. "Justice has no independent existence; it results from mutual contracts, and establishes itself wherever there is a mutual engagement to guard against doing or sustaining mutual injury.

36. "Injustice is not intrinsically bad; it has this character only because there is joined with it a fear of not escaping those who are appointed to punish actions marked with that character.

37. "It is not possible for a man who secretly does anything in contravention of the agreement which men have made with one another to guard against doing or sustaining mutual injury, to believe that he shall always escape notice, even if he have escaped notice already ten thousand times; for, till his death, it is uncertain whether he will not be detected.

38. "In a general point of view, justice is the same thing to every one; for there is something advantageous in mutual society. Nevertheless, the difference of place, and divers other circumstances, make justice vary.

39. "From the moment that a thing declared just by the law is generally recognized as useful for the mutual relations of men, it becomes really just, whether it is universally regarded as such or not.

40. "But if, on the contrary, a thing established by law is not really useful for the social relations, then it is not just; and if that which was just, inasmuch as it was useful, loses this character, after having been for some time considered so, it is not less true that, during that time, it was really just, at least for those who do not perplex themselves about vain words, but who prefer, in every case, examining and judging for themselves.

41. "When, without any fresh circumstances arising, a thing which has been declared just in practice does not agree with the impressions of reason, that is a proof that the thing was not really just. In the same way, when in consequence of new circumstances, a thing which has been pronounced just does not any longer appear to agree with utility, the thing which was just, inasmuch as it was useful to the social relations and intercourse of mankind, ceases to be just the moment when it ceases to be useful.

42. "He who desires to live tranquilly without having anything to fear from other men, ought to make himself friends; those whom he cannot make friends of, he should at least avoid rendering enemies; and if that is not in his power, he should, as far as possible, avoid all intercourse with them and keep them aloof, as far as it is for his interest to do so.

43. "The happiest men are they who have arrived at the point of having nothing to fear from those who surround them. Such men live with one another most agreeably, having the firmest grounds of confidence in one another, enjoying the advantages of friendship in all their fulness, and not lamenting, as a pitiable circumstance, the premature death of their friends."

TITUS LUCRETIUS CARUS

(95-51)

ON THE NATURE OF THINGS

Translated from the Latin by*

H. A. J. MUNRO

BOOK II. THE TRANQUILLITY OF THE PHILOSOPHER

It is sweet, when on the great sea the winds trouble its waters, to behold from land another's deep distress; not that it is a pleasure and delight that any should be afflicted, but because it is sweet to see from what evils you are yourself exempt. It is sweet also to look upon the mighty struggles of war arrayed along the plains without sharing yourself in the danger. But nothing is more welcome than to hold the lofty and serene positions well fortified by the learning of the wise, from which you may look down upon others and see them wandering all abroad and going astray in their search for the path of life, see the contest among them of intellect, the rivalry of birth, the striving night and day with surpassing effort to struggle up to the summit of power and be masters of the world. O miserable minds of men! O blinded breasts! in what darkness of life and in how great dangers is passed this term of life whatever its duration! not choose to see that nature craves for herself no more than this, that pain hold aloof from the body, and she in mind enjoy a feeling of pleasure exempt from care and fear? Therefore we see that for the body's nature few things are needed at all, such and such only as take away pain. Nay, though more gratefully at times they can minister to us many choice delights, nature for her part wants them not, when there are no golden images of youths through the house holding in their right hands flaming lamps for supply of light to the nightly banquet, when the house shines not with silver nor

* From *T. Lucretii Cari De Rerum Natura libri sex.* Reprinted from Lucretius' *On the Nature of Things*, translated by H. A. J. Munro, London, 1864; '86.

glitters with gold nor do the panelled and gilded roofs reëcho to the harp, what time, though these things be wanting, they spread themselves in groups on the soft grass beside a stream of water under the boughs of a high tree and at no great cost pleasantly refresh their bodies, above all when the weather smiles and the seasons of the year besprinkle the green grass with flowers. Nor do hot fevers sooner quit the body, if you toss about on pictured tapestry and blushing purple, than if you must lie under a poor man's blanket. Wherefore since treasures avail nothing in respect of our body nor birth nor the glory of kingly power, advancing farther you must hold that they are of no service to the mind as well; unless may be when you see your legions swarm over the ground of the campus waging the mimicry of war, strengthened flank and rear by powerful reserves and great force of cavalry, and you marshall them equipped in arms and animated with one spirit, thereupon you find that religious scruples scared by these things fly panic-stricken from the mind; and that then fears of death leave the breast unembarrassed and free from care, when you see your fleet swarm forth and spread itself far and wide. But if we see that these things are food for laughter and mere mockeries, and in good truth the fears of men and dogging cares dread not the clash of arms and cruel weapons, if unabashed they mix among kings and kesars and stand not in awe of the glitter from gold nor the brilliant sheen of the purple robe, how can you doubt that this is wholly the prerogative of reason, when the whole of life withal is a struggle in the dark? For even as children are flurried and dread all things in the thick darkness, thus we in the daylight fear at times things not a whit more to be dreaded than those which children shudder at in the dark and fancy sure to be. This terror therefore and darkness of mind must be dispelled not by the rays of the sun and glittering shafts of day, but by the aspect and law of nature.

Now mark and I will explain by what motion the begetting bodies of matter do beget different things and after they are begotten again break them up, and by what force they are compelled so to do and what velocity is given to them for travelling through the great void: do you mind to give heed to my words.

For verily matter does not cohere inseparably massed together, since we see that everything wanes and perceive that all things ebb as it were by length of time and that age withdraws them from our sight, though yet the sum is seen to remain unimpaired by reason that the bodies which quit each thing, lessen the things from which they go, gift with increase those to which they have come, compel the former to grow old, the latter to come to their prime, and yet abide not with these. Thus the sum of things is ever renewed and mortals live by a reciprocal dependency. Some nations wax, others wane, and in a brief space the races of living things are changed and like runners hand over the lamp of life.

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But some in opposition to this, ignorant of matter, believe that nature cannot without the providence of the gods in such nice conformity to the ways of men vary the seasons of the year and bring forth crops, ay and all the other things, which divine pleasure the guide of life prompts men to approach, escorting them in person and enticing them by her fondlings to continue their races through the arts of Venus, that mankind may not come to an end. Now when they suppose that the gods designed all things for the sake of men, they seem to me in all respects to have strayed most widely from true reason. For even if I did not know what first-beginnings are, yet this, judging by the very arrangements of heaven, I would venture to affirm, and led by many other circumstances to maintain, that the nature of the world has by no means been made for us by divine power: so great are the defects with which it stands encumbered.

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BOOK III. THE FEAR OF DEATH DISPELLED

Death therefore to us is nothing, concerns us not a jot, since the nature of the mind is proved to be mortal; and as in time gone by we felt no distress, when the Pœni from all sides came together to do battle, and all things shaken by war's troublous uproar shuddered and quaked beneath high heaven, and mortal

men were in doubt which of the two peoples it should be to whose empire all must fall by sea and land alike, thus when we shall be no more, when there shall have been a separation of body and soul, out of both of which we are each formed into a single being, to us, you may be sure, who then shall be no more, nothing whatever can happen to excite sensation, not if earth shall be mingled with sea and sea with heaven. And even supposing the nature of the mind and power of the soul do feel, after they have been severed from our body, yet that is nothing to us who by the binding tie of marriage between body and soul are formed each into one single being. And if time should gather up our matter after our death and put it once more into the position in which it now is, and the light of life be given to us again, this result even would concern us not at all, when the chain of our self-consciousness has once been snapped asunder. So now we give ourselves no concern about any self which we have been before, nor do we feel any distress on the score of that self. For when you look back on the whole past course of immeasurable time and think how manifold are the shapes which the motions of matter take, you may easily credit this too, that these very same seeds of which we now are formed, have often before been placed in the same order in which they now are; and yet we cannot recover this in memory: a break in our existence has been interposed, and all the motions have wandered to and fro far astray from the sensations they produced. For he whom evil is to befall, must in his own person exist at the very time it comes, if the misery and suffering are haply to have any place at all; but since death precludes this, and forbids him to be, upon whom the ills can be brought, you may be sure that we have nothing to fear after death, and that he who exists not, cannot become miserable, and that it matters not a whit whether he has been born into life at any other time, when immortal death has taken away his mortal life.

Therefore when you see a man bemoaning his hard case, that after death he shall either rot with his body laid in the grave or be devoured by flames or the jaws of wild beasts, you may be sure that his ring betrays a flaw and that there lurks in his heart

a secret goad, though he himself declare that he does not believe that any sense will remain to him after death. He does not methinks really grant the conclusion which he professes to grant nor the principle on which he so professes, nor does he take and force himself root and branch out of life, but all unconsciously imagines something of self to survive. For when any one in life suggests to himself that birds and beasts will rend his body after death, he makes moan for himself: he does not separate himself from that self, nor withdraw himself fully from the body so thrown out, and fancies himself that other self and stands by and impregnates it with his own sense. Hence he makes much moan that he has been born mortal, and sees not that after real death there will be no other self to remain in life and lament to self that his own self has met death, and there to stand and grieve that his own self there lying is mangled or burnt. For if it is an evil after death to be pulled about by the devouring jaws of wild beasts, I cannot see why it should not be a cruel pain to be laid on fires and burn in hot flames, or to be placed in honey and stifled, or to stiffen with cold, stretched on the smooth surface of an icy slab of stone, or to be pressed down and crushed by a load of earth above.

"Now no more shall thy house admit thee with glad welcome, nor a most virtuous wife and sweet children run to be the first to snatch kisses and touch thy heart with a silent joy. No more mayst thou be prosperous in thy doings, a safeguard to thine own. One disastrous day has taken from thee luckless man in luckless wise all the many prizes of life." This do men say; but add not thereto "and now no longer does any craving for these things beset thee withal." For if they could rightly perceive this in thought and follow up the thought in words, they would release themselves from great distress and apprehension of mind. "Thou, even as now thou art, sunk in the sleep of death, shalt continue so to be all time to come, freed from all distressful pains; but we with a sorrow that would not be sated wept for thee, when close by thou didst turn to an ashen hue on thy appalling funeral pile, and no length of days shall pluck from our hearts our ever-during grief." This question therefore should be

asked of this speaker, what there is in it so passing bitter, if it come in the end to sleep and rest, that any one should pine in never-ending sorrow.

This too men often, when they have reclined at table cup in hand and shade their brows with crowns, love to say from the heart: "Short is this enjoyment for poor weak men; presently it will have been and never after may it be called back." As if after their death it is to be one of their chiefest afflictions that thirst and parching drought is to burn them up, hapless wretches, or a craving for anything else is to beset them. What folly! no one feels the want of himself and life at the time when mind and body are together sunk in sleep; for all we care this sleep might be everlasting, no craving whatever for ourselves then moves us. And yet by no means do those first-beginnings throughout our frame wander at that time far away from their sense-producing motions, at the moment when a man starts up from sleep and collects himself. Death therefore must be thought to concern us much less, if less there can be than what we see to be nothing; for a greater dispersion of the mass of matter follows after death, and no one wakes up, upon whom the chill cessation of life has once come.

Once more, if the nature of things could suddenly utter a voice and in person could rally any of us in such words as these: "What hast thou, O mortal, so much at heart, that thou goest such lengths in sickly sorrows? why bemoan and bewail death? for say thy life past and gone has been welcome to thee and thy blessings have not all, as if they were poured into a perforated vessel, run through and been lost without avail: why not then take thy departure like a guest filled with life, and with resignation, thou fool, enter upon untroubled rest? but if all that thou hast enjoyed, has been squandered and lost, and life is a grievance, why seek to make any addition, to be wasted perversely in its turn and lost utterly without avail? why not rather make an end of life and travail? for there is nothing more which I can contrive and discover for thee to give pleasure: all things are ever the same. Though thy body is not yet decayed with years nor thy frame worn out and exhausted, yet all things remain the same, ay

though in length of life thou shouldst outlast all races of things now living, nay even more if thou shouldst never die," what answer have we to make save this, that nature sets up against us a well-founded claim and puts forth in her pleading a true indictment? If however one of greater age and more advanced in years should complain and lament, poor wretch, his death more than is right, would she not with greater cause raise her voice and rally him in sharp accents: "Away from this time forth with thy tears, rascal; a truce to thy complainings: thou decayest after full enjoyment of all the prizes of life. But because thou ever yearnest for what is not present, and despisest what is, life has slipped from thy grasp unfinished and unsatisfying, and or ever thou thoughtest, death has taken his stand at thy pillow, before thou canst take thy departure sated and filled with good things. Now however resign all things unsuited to thy age, and with a good grace up and greatly go: thou must." With good reason methinks she would bring her charge, with reason rally and reproach; for old things give way and are supplanted by new without fail, and one thing must ever be replenished out of other things; and no one is delivered over to the pit and black Tartarus: matter is needed for after generations to grow; all of which though will follow thee when they have finished their term of life; and thus it is that all these no less than thou have before this come to an end and hereafter will come to an end. Thus one thing will never cease to rise out of another, and life is granted to none in fee-simple, to all in usufruct. Think too how the bygone antiquity of everlasting time before our birth was nothing to us. Nature therefore holds this up to us as a mirror of the time yet to come after our death. Is there aught in this that looks appalling, aught that wears an aspect of gloom? is it not more untroubled than any sleep?

And those things sure enough, which are fabled to be in the deep of Acheron, do all exist for us in this life. No Tantalus, numbed by groundless terror, as the story is, fears, poor wretch, a huge stone hanging in air; but in life rather a baseless dread of the gods vexes mortals: the fall they fear is such fall of luck as chance brings to each. Nor do birds eat a way into Tityos

laid in Acheron, nor can they sooth to say find during eternity food to peck under his large breast. However huge the bulk of body he extends, though such as to take up with outspread limbs not nine acres merely, but the whole earth, yet will he not be able to endure everlasting pain and supply food from his own body for ever. But he is for us a Tityos, whom as he grovels in love vultures rend and bitter bitter anguish eats up or troubled thoughts from any other passion do rive. In life too we have a Sisyphus before our eyes who is bent on asking from the people the rods and cruel axes, and always retires defeated and disappointed. For to ask for power, which empty as it is is never given, and always in the chase of it to undergo severe toil, this is forcing up-hill with much effort a stone which after all rolls back again from the summit and seeks in headlong haste the levels of the plain. Then to be ever feeding the thankless nature of the mind, and never to fill it full and sate it with good things, as the seasons of the year do for us, when they come round and bring their fruits and varied delights, though after all we are never filled with the enjoyments of life, this methinks is to do what is told of the maidens in the flower of their age, to keep pouring water into a perforated vessel which in spite of all can never be filled full. Moreover Cerberus and the furies and yon privation of light [are idle tales, as well as all the rest, Ixion's wheel and black] Tartarus belching forth hideous fires from his throat: things which nowhere are nor sooth to say can be. But there is in life a dread of punishment for evil deeds, signal as the deeds are signal, and for atonement of guilt, the prison and the frightful hurling down from the rock, scourgings, executioners, the dungeon of the doomed, the pitch, the metal plate, torches; and even though these are wanting, yet the conscience-stricken mind through boding fears applies to itself goads and frightens itself with whips, and sees not meanwhile what end there can be of ills or what limit at last is to be set to punishments, and fears lest these very evils be enhanced after death. The life of fools at length becomes a hell here on earth.

This too you may sometimes say to yourself, "Even worthy Ancus has quitted the light with his eyes, who was far far better

than thou, unconscionable man. And since then many other kings and kesars have been laid low, who lorded it over mighty nations. He too, even he who erst paved a way over the great sea and made a path for his legions to march over the deep and taught them to pass on foot over the salt pools and set at naught the roarings of the sea, trampling on them with his horses, had the light taken from him and shed forth his soul from his dying body. The son of the Scipios, thunderbolt of war, terror of Carthage, yielded his bones to earth just as if he were the lowest menial. Think too of the inventors of all sciences and graceful arts, think of the companions of the Heliconian maids; among whom Homer bore the sceptre without a peer, and he now sleeps the same sleep as others. Then there is Democritus who, when a ripe old age had warned him that the memory-waking motions of his mind were waning, by his own spontaneous act offered up his head to death. Even Epicurus passed away, when his light of life had run its course, he who surpassed in intellect the race of man and quenched the light of all, as the ethereal sun arisen quenches the stars. Wilt thou then hesitate and think it a hardship to die? thou for whom life is well nigh dead whilst yet thou livest and seest the light, who spendest the greater part of thy time in sleep and snorest wide awake and ceasest not to see visions and hast a mind troubled with groundless terror and canst not discover often what it is that ails thee, when besotted man thou art sore pressed on all sides with full many cares and goest astray tumbling about in the wayward wanderings of thy mind.

If, just as they are seen to feel that a load is on their mind which wears them out with its pressure, men might apprehend from what causes too it is produced and whence such a pile, if I may say so, of ills lies on their breast, they would not spend their life as we see them now for the most part do, not knowing any one of them what he means and wanting ever change of place as though he might lay his burden down. The man who is sick of home often issues forth from his large mansion, and as suddenly comes back to it, finding as he does that he is no better off abroad. He races to his country-house, driving his jennets in

headlong haste, as if hurrying to bring help to a house on fire: he yawns the moment he has reached the door of his house, or sinks heavily into sleep and seeks forgetfulness, or even in haste goes back again to town. In this way each man flies from himself (but self, from whom, as you may be sure is commonly the case, he cannot escape, clings to him in his own despite), hates too himself, because he is sick and knows not the cause of the malady; for if he could rightly see into this, relinquishing all else each man would study to learn the nature of things, since the point at stake is the condition for eternity, not for one hour, in which mortals have to pass all the time which remains for them to expect after death.

Once more what evil lust of life is this which constrains us with such force to be so mightily troubled in doubts and dangers? a sure term of life is fixed for mortals, and death cannot be shunned, but meet it we must. Moreover we are ever engaged, ever involved in the same pursuits, and no new pleasure is struck out by living on; but whilst what we crave is wanting, it seems to transcend all the rest; then, when it has been gotten, we crave something else, and ever does the same thirst of life possess us, as we gape for it open-mouthed. Quite doubtful it is what fortune the future will carry with it or what chance will bring us or what end is at hand. Nor by prolonging life do we take one tittle from the time past in death nor can we fret anything away, whereby we may haply be a less long time in the condition of the dead. Therefore you may complete as many generations as you please during your life; none the less however will that everlasting death await you; and for no less long a time will he be no more in being, who beginning with to-day has ended his life, than the man who has died many months and years ago.

EPICTETUS

(60 A. D.–?)

THE DISCOURSES OF EPICTETUS

Translated from the Greek by*
THOMAS WENTWORTH HIGGINSON

BOOK I. CHAPTER I. OF THE THINGS WHICH ARE, AND THE THINGS WHICH ARE NOT, IN OUR OWN POWER

Of human faculties in general, you will find that each is unable to contemplate itself, and therefore to approve or disapprove itself. How far does the proper sphere of grammar extend? As far as the judging of language. Of music? As far as the judging of melody. Does either of them contemplate itself, then? By no means.

Thus, for instance, when you are to write to your friend, grammar will tell you what to write; but whether you are to write to your friend at all, or no, grammar will not tell you. Thus music, with regard to tunes; but whether it be proper or improper, at any particular time, to sing or play, music will not tell you.

What will tell, then?

That faculty which contemplates both itself and all other things.

And what is that?

The Reasoning Faculty; for that alone is found able to place an estimate upon itself, — what it is, what are its powers, what its value and likewise all the rest. For what is it else that says, gold is beautiful? since the gold itself does not speak. Evidently, that faculty which judges of the appearances of things. What else distinguishes music, grammar, the other faculties, proves their uses, and shows their proper occasions?

Nothing but this.

* From Ἀρριάνου τῶν Ἐπικτήτου Διατριβῶν, βιβλία τέσσαρα. Reprinted from *The Works of Epictetus*, translated by T. W. Higginson, Boston, Little, Brown & Co., 2 vols., new and rev. ed., 1890.

As it was fit, then, this most excellent and superior faculty alone, a right use of the appearances of things, the gods have placed in our own power; but all other matters they have not placed in our power. What, was it because they would not? I rather think that, if they could, they had granted us these too; but they certainly could not. For, placed upon earth, and confined to such a body and to such companions, how was it possible that, in these respects, we should not be hindered by things outside of us?

But what says Zeus? "O Epictetus, if it had been possible, I had made this little body and property of thine free, and not liable to hindrance. But now do not mistake; it is not thy own, but only a finer mixture of clay. Since, then, I could not give thee this, I have given thee a certain portion of myself; this faculty of exerting the powers of pursuit and avoidance, of desire and aversion, and, in a word, the use of the appearances of things. Taking care of this point, and making what is thy own to consist in this, thou wilt never be restrained, never be hindered; thou wilt not groan, wilt not complain, wilt not flatter any one. How, then? Do all these advantages seem small to thee? Heaven forbid! Let them suffice thee, then, and thank the gods."

But now, when it is in our power to take care of one thing, and to apply ourselves to one, we choose rather to take care of many, and to encumber ourselves with many, — body, property, brother, friend, child, and slave, — and, by this multiplicity of encumbrances, we are burdened and weighed down. Thus, when the weather does not happen to be fair for sailing, we sit in distress and gaze out perpetually. Which way is the wind? North. What good will that do us? When will the west blow? When it pleases, friend, or when Æolus pleases; for Zeus has not made you dispenser of the winds, but Æolus.

What, then, is to be done?

To make the best of what is in our power, and take the rest as it occurs.

And how does it occur?

As it pleases God.

What, then, must I be the only one to lose my head?

Why, would you have all the world, then, lose their heads for

your consolation? Why are not you willing to stretch out your neck, like Lateranus, when he was commanded by Nero to be beheaded? For, shrinking a little after receiving a weak blow, he stretched it out again. And before this, when Epaphroditus, the freedman of Nero, interrogated him about the conspiracy, "If I have a mind to say anything," replied he, "I will tell it to your master."

What resource have we, then, upon such occasions? Why, what else but to distinguish between what is *ours*, and what not *ours*, — what is right, and what is wrong? I must die, and must I die groaning too? I must be fettered; must I be lamenting too? I must be exiled; and what hinders me, then, but that I may go smiling, and cheerful, and serene? "Betray a secret." I will not betray it, for this is in my own power. "Then I will fetter you." What do you say, man? Fetter me? You will fetter my leg, but not Zeus himself can get the better of my free will. "I will throw you into prison; I will behead that paltry body of yours." Did I ever tell you that I alone had a head not liable to be cut off? These things ought philosophers to study; these ought they daily to write, and in these to exercise themselves.

Thraseas used to say, "I had rather be killed to-day than banished to-morrow." But how did Rufus answer him? "If you prefer it as a heavier misfortune, how foolish a preference! If as a lighter, who has put it in your power? Why do you not study to be contented with what is allotted you?"

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CHAPTER XXVI. WHAT THE RULE OF LIFE IS

As some one was reading hypothetical propositions, Epictetus remarked that it was a rule in these to admit whatever was in accordance with the hypothesis, but much more a rule in life to do what was in accordance with nature. For, if we desire in every matter and on every occasion to conform to nature, we must on every occasion evidently make it our aim, neither to omit anything thus conformable, nor to admit anything inconsistent.

Philosophers, therefore, first exercise us in theory, which is the more easy task, and then lead us to the more difficult; for in theory there is nothing to hinder our following what we are taught, but in life there are many things to draw us aside. It is ridiculous, then, to say we must begin with these applications, for it is not easy to begin with the most difficult; and this excuse children should make to those parents who dislike that they should study philosophy. "Am I to blame then, sir, and ignorant of my duty, and of what is incumbent on me? If this is neither to be learned, nor taught, why do you find fault with me? If it is to be taught, pray teach me yourself; or, if you cannot, let me learn it from those who profess to understand it. For what think you; that I voluntarily fall into evil, and miss good? Heaven forbid! What, then, is the cause of my faults? Ignorance. Are you not willing, then, that I should get rid of my ignorance? Who was ever taught the art of music, or navigation, by anger? Do you expect, then, that your anger should teach me the art of living?"

This, however, can properly be said only by one who is really in earnest. But he who reads these things, and applies to the philosophers, merely for the sake of showing, at some entertainment, that he understands hypothetical reasonings, what aim has he but to be admired by some senator, who happens to sit near him? Great possessions may be won by such aims as that, but what we hold as wealth passes there for folly. It is hard, therefore, to overcome by appearances, where vain things thus pass for great.

I once saw a person weeping and embracing the knees of Epaphroditus, and deploring his hard fortune, that he had not more than 150,000 drachmæ left. What said Epaphroditus then? Did he laugh at him, as we should do? No; but cried out with astonishment: "Poor man! How could you be silent under it? How could you bear it?"

The first step, therefore, towards becoming a philosopher is to be sensible in what state the ruling faculty of the mind is; for on knowing it to be weak, no person will immediately employ it in great attempts. But, for want of this, some who can scarce digest a crumb will yet buy and swallow whole treatises; and so they

throw them up again, or cannot digest them; and then come colics, fluxes, and fevers. Such persons ought to consider what they can bear. Indeed, it is easy to convince an ignorant person, so far as concerns theory; but in matters relating to life, no one offers himself to conviction, and we hate those who have convinced us. Socrates used to say, that we ought not to live a life unexamined.[1]

BOOK II. CHAPTER VIII. THE ESSENCE OF GOOD

God is beneficial. Good is also benficial. It should seem, then, that where the essence of God is, there too is the essence of good. What then is the essence of God, — flesh? By no means. An estate? Fame? By no means. Intelligence? Knowledge? Right reason? Certainly. Here, then, without more ado, seek the essence of good. For do you seek that quality in a plant? No. Or in a brute? No. If, then, you seek it only in a rational subject, why do you seek it anywhere but in what distinguishes that from things irrational? Plants make no voluntary use of things, and therefore you do not apply the term of *good* to them. *Good*, then, implies such use. And nothing else? If so, you may say that good and happiness and unhappiness belong to mere animals. But this you do not say, and you are right; for, how much soever they have the use of things, they have not the intelligent use, and with good reason; for they are made to be subservient to others, and not of primary importance. Why was an ass made? Was it as being of primary importance? No; but because we had need of a back able to carry burdens. We had need too that he should be capable of locomotion; therefore he had the voluntary use of things added, otherwise he could not have moved. But here his endowments end; for, if an understanding of that use had been likewise added, he would not, in reason, have been subject to us, nor have done us these services, but would have been like an equal to ourselves. Why will you not, therefore, seek the essence of good in that without which you cannot say that there is good in anything?

[1] Plato, *Apologia*, i. 28.

What then? Are not all these likewise the works of the gods? They are; but not primary existences, nor parts of the gods. But you are a primary existence. You are a distinct portion of the essence of God, and contain a certain part of him in yourself. Why then are you ignorant of your noble birth? Why do not you consider whence you came? Why do not you remember, when you are eating, who you are who eat, and whom you feed? When you are in the company of women, when you are conversing, when you are exercising, when you are disputing, do not you know that it is the Divine you feed, the Divine you exercise? You carry a God about with you, poor wretch, and know nothing of it. Do you suppose I mean some god without you of gold or silver? It is within yourself that you carry him; and you do not observe that you profane him by impure thoughts and unclean actions. If the mere external image of God were present, you would not dare to act as you do; and when God himself is within you, and hears and sees all, are not you ashamed to think and act thus, — insensible of your own nature, and at enmity with God?

Why, then, are we afraid, when we send a young man from the school into active life, that he should behave indecently, eat indecently, converse indecently with women; that he should either debase himself by slovenliness, or clothe himself too finely? Knows he not the God within him? Knows he not in what company he goes? It is provoking to hear him say [to his instructor], "I wish to have *you* with me." Have you not God? Do you seek any other, while you have him? Or will he tell you any other things than these? If you were a statue of Phidias, as Zeus or Athena, you would remember both yourself and the artist; and if you had any sense, you would endeavor to be in no way unworthy of him who formed you, nor of yourself; nor to appear in an unbecoming manner to spectators. And are you now careless how you appear when you are the workmanship of Zeus himself? And yet, what comparison is there, either between the artists, or the things they have formed? What work of any artist has conveyed into its structure those very faculties which are shown in shaping it? Is it anything but marble, or brass, or gold, or ivory? And the Athena of Phidias, when its hand is once

extended, and a *Victory* placed in it, remains in that attitude forever. But the works of God are endowed with motion, breath, the powers of use and judgment. Being, then, the work of such an artist, will you dishonor him, especially when he hath not only formed you, but given your guardianship to yourself? Will you not only be forgetful of this, but, moreover, dishonor the trust? If God had committed some orphan to your charge, would you have been thus careless of him? He has delivered yourself to your care; and says, "I had no one fitter to be trusted than you; preserve this person for me, such as he is by nature, — modest, faithful, noble, unterrified, dispassionate, tranquil." And will you not preserve him?

But it will be said: "What need of this lofty look, and dignity of face?"

I answer, that I have not yet so much dignity as the case demands; for I do not yet trust to what I have learned, and accepted. I still fear my own weakness. Let me but take courage a little, and then you shall see such a look, and such an appearance, as I ought to have. Then I will show you the statue when it is finished, when it is polished. Do you think I will show you a supercilious countenance? Heaven forbid! For Olympian Zeus doth not haughtily lift his brow, but keeps a steady countenance, as becomes him who is about so say, —

My promise is irrevocable, sure.[1]

Such will I show myself to you; faithful, modest, noble, tranquil.

"What, and immortal too, and exempt from age and sickness?"

No. But sickening and dying as becomes the divine within me. This is in my power; this I can do. The other is not in my power, nor can I do it. Shall I show you the muscular training of a philosopher

"What muscles are those?"

A will undisappointed, evils avoided, powers duly exerted, careful resolutions, unerring decisions. These you shall see.

[1] Homer's *Iliad*, i. 526.

CHAPTER XI. THE BEGINNING OF PHILOSOPHY

The beginning of philosophy, at least to such as enter upon it in a proper way, and by the door, is a consciousness of our own weakness and inability in necessary things. For we came into the world without any natural idea of a right-angled triangle; of a diesis, or a semitone, in music; but we learn each of these things by some artistic instruction. Hence, they who do not understand them do not assume to understand them. But who ever came into the world without an innate idea of good and evil, fair and base, becoming and unbecoming, happiness and misery, proper and improper; what ought to be done, and what not to be done? Hence, we all make use of the terms, and endeavor to apply our impressions to particular cases. "Such a one hath acted well, not well; right, not right; is unhappy, is happy; is just, is unjust." Which of us refrains from these terms? Who defers the use of them till he has learnt it, as those do who are ignorant of lines and sounds? The reason of this is, that we come instructed in some degree by nature upon these subjects; and from this beginning, we go on to add self-conceit. "For why," say you, "should I not know what fair or base is? Have I not the idea of it?" You have. "Do I not apply this idea to the particular instance?" You do. "Do I not apply it rightly, then?" Here lies the whole question; and here arises the self-conceit. Beginning from these acknowledged points, men proceed, by applying them improperly, to reach the very position most questionable. For, if they knew how to apply them also, they would be all but perfect.

If you think that you know how to apply your general principles to particular cases, tell me on what you base this application.

"Upon its seeming so to me."

But it does not seem so to another; and does not he too think that he makes a right application?

"He does."

Is it possible, then, that each of you should rightly apply your principles, on the very subjects about which your opinions conflict?

"It is not."

Have you anything to show us, then, for this application, beyond the fact of its seeming so to you? And does a madman act any otherwise than seems to him right? Is this, then, a sufficient criterion for him too?

"It is not."

Come, therefore, to some stronger ground than seeming.

"What is that?"

The beginning of philosophy is this: the being sensible of the disagreement of men with each other; an inquiry into the cause of this disagreement; and a disapprobation and distrust of what merely seems; a careful examination into what seems, whether it seems rightly; and the discovery of some rule which shall serve like a balance, for the determination of weights; like a square, for distinguishing straight and crooked. This is the beginning of philosophy.

Is it possible that all things which seem right to all persons are so? Can things contradictory be right? We say not all things; but all that seem so to *us*. And why more to *you* than to the Syrians or Egyptians; than to me, or to any other man? Not at all more.

Therefore, what seems to each man is not sufficient to determine the reality of a thing; for even in weights and measures we are not satisfied with the bare appearance, but for everything we find some rule. And is there, then, in the present case no rule preferable to what seems? Is it possible that what is of the greatest necessity in human life should be left incapable of determination and discovery?

There must be some rule. And why do we not seek and discover it, and, when we have discovered, ever after make use of it, without fail, so as not even to move a finger without it? For this, I conceive, is what, when found, will cure those of their madness who make use of no other measure but their own perverted way of thinking. Afterwards, beginning from certain known and determinate points, we may make use of general principles, properly applied to particulars.

Thus, what is the subject that falls under our inquiry? Plea-

sure. Bring it to the rule. Throw it into the scale. Must good be something in which it is fit to confide, and to which we may trust? Yes. Is it fit to trust to anything unstable? No. Is pleasure, then, a stable thing? No. Take it, then, and throw it out of the scale, and drive it far distant from the place of good things.

But, if you are not quick-sighted, and one balance is insufficient, bring another. Is it fit to be elated by good? Yes. Is it fit, then, to be elated by a present pleasure? See that you do not say it is; otherwise I shall not think you so much as worthy to use a scale. Thus are things judged and weighed, when we have the rules ready. This is the part of philosophy, to examine, and fix the rules; and to make use of them, when they are known, is the business of a wise and good man.

BOOK III. CHAPTER III. THE CHIEF CONCERN OF A GOOD MAN

The chief concern of a wise and good man is his own Reason. The body is the concern of a physician, and of a gymnastic trainer; and the fields, of the husbandman. The business of a wise and good man is to use the phenomena of existence conformably to Nature. Now, every soul, as it is naturally formed for an assent to truth, a dissent from falsehood, and a suspense of judgment with regard to things uncertain, so it is moved by a desire of good, an aversion from evil, and an indifference to what is neither good nor evil. For as a money-changer, or a gardener, is not at liberty to reject Cæsar's coin, but when once it is shown is obliged, whether he will or not, to deliver his wares in exchange for it, so is it with the soul. Apparent good at first sight attracts, and evil repels. Nor will the soul any more reject an evident appearance of good, than Cæsar's coin.

Hence depends every movement, both of God and man; and hence good is preferred to every obligation, however near. My connection is not with my father; but with good. Are you so hard-hearted? Such is my nature, and such is the coin which God hath given me. If therefore good is interpreted to be anything

but what is fair and just, away go father and brother and country and everything. What! Shall I overlook my own good, and give it up to you? For what? "I am your father." But not my good. "I am your brother." But not my good. But if we place it in a rightly trained Will, good must then consist in an observance of the several relations of life; and then he who gives up mere externals acquires good. Your father deprives you of your money; but he does not hurt you. He will possess more land than you, as much more as he pleases; but will he possess more honor, more fidelity, more affection? Who can deprive you of this possession? Not even Zeus; for he did not will it so, since he has put this good into my own power, and given it me, like his own, uncompelled, unrestrained, and unhindered. But when any one deals in coin different from this, then whoever shows it to him, may have whatever is sold for it in return. A thievish proconsul comes into the province. What coin does he use? Silver. Show it him, and carry off what you please. An adulterer comes. What coin does he use? Women. Take the coin, says one, and give me this trifle. "Give it me, and it is yours." Another is addicted to other debauchery; give him but his coin, and take what you please. Another is fond of hunting; give him a fine pony or puppy and he will sell you for it what you will, though it be with sighs and groans. For there is that within which controls him, and assumes this to be current coin.

In this manner ought every one chiefly to train himself. When you go out in the morning, examine whomsoever you see or hear; and answer as if to a question. What have you seen? A handsome person. Apply the rule. Is this a thing controllable by Will or uncontrollable? Uncontrollable. Then discard it. What have you seen? One in agony for the death of a child. Apply the rule. Death is inevitable. Banish this despair, then. Has a consul met you? Apply the rule. What kind of thing is the consular office, — controllable by Will or uncontrollable? Uncontrollable. Throw aside this too. It will not pass. Cast it away; it is nothing to you.

If we acted thus, and practised in this manner from morning till night, by Heaven! something would be done. Whereas now,

on the contrary, we are allured by every semblance, half asleep; and if we ever awake, it is only a little in the school; but as soon as we go out, if we meet any one grieving, we say, "He is undone." If a consul, "How happy is he!" If an exile, "How miserable!" If a poor man, "How wretched; he has nothing to eat!"

These miserable prejudices, then, are to be lopped off; and here is our whole strength to be applied. For what is weeping and groaning? Prejudice. What is misfortune? Prejudice. What is sedition, discord, complaint, accusation, impiety, levity? All these are prejudices, and nothing more; and prejudices concerning things uncontrollable by Will, as if they could be either good or evil. Let any one transfer these convictions to things controllable by Will, and I will engage that he will preserve his constancy, whatever be the state of things about him.

The soul is like a vase filled with water; while the semblances of things fall like rays upon its surface. If the water is moved, the ray will seem to be moved likewise, though it is in reality without motion. When, therefore, any one is seized with a giddiness in his head, it is not the arts and virtues that are bewildered, but the mind in which they lie; when this recovers its composure, so will they likewise.

MARCUS AURELIUS ANTONINUS
(121-180)

MEDITATIONS

Translated from the Greek by*
GEORGE LONG

BOOK II. THE ORDERING OF HUMAN LIFE

1. Begin the morning by saying to thyself, I shall meet with the busybody, the ungrateful, arrogant, deceitful, envious, unsocial. All these things happen to them by reason of their ignorance of what is good and evil. But I who have seen the nature of the good that it is beautiful, and of the bad that it is ugly, and the nature of him who does wrong, that it is akin to me, not [only] of the same blood or seed, but that it participates in [the same] intelligence and [the same] portion of the divinity, I can neither be injured by any of them, for no one can fix on me what is ugly, nor can I be angry with my kinsman, nor hate him. For we are made for co-operation, like feet, like hands, like eyelids, like the rows of the upper and lower teeth. To act against one another then is contrary to nature; and it is acting against one another to be vexed and to turn away.

2. Whatever this is that I am, it is a little flesh and breath, and the ruling part. Throw away thy books; no longer distract thyself: it is not allowed; but as if thou wast now dying, despise the flesh; it is blood and bones and a network, a contexture of nerves, veins, and arteries. See the breath also, what kind of a thing it is, air, and not always the same, but every moment sent out and again sucked in. The third then is the ruling part: consider thus: Thou art an old man; no longer let this be a slave, no longer be pulled by the strings like a puppet to unsocial movements, no longer be either dissatisfied with thy present lot, or shrink from the future.

* From Τὰ εἰς ἑαυτόν, *sive Ad Seipsum Commentarii Morales.* Reprinted from *The Thoughts of the Emperor M. Aurelius Antoninus.* Translated by George Long. London, 1862, etc.

3. All that is from the gods is full of providence. That which is from fortune is not separated from nature or without an interweaving and involution with the things which are ordered by providence. From thence all things flow; and there is besides necessity, and that which is for the advantage of the whole universe, of which thou art a part. But that is good for every part of nature which the nature of the whole brings, and what serves to maintain this nature. Now the universe is preserved, as by the changes of the elements so by the changes of things compounded of the elements. Let these principles be enough for thee, let them always be fixed opinions. But cast away the thirst after books, that thou mayest not die murmuring, but cheerfully, truly, and from thy heart thankful to the gods.

4. Remember how long thou hast been putting off these things, and how often thou hast received an opportunity from the gods, and yet dost not use it. Thou must now at last perceive of what universe thou art a part, and of what administrator of the universe thy existence is an efflux, and that a limit of time is fixed for thee, which if thou dost not use for clearing away the clouds from thy mind, it will go and thou wilt go, and it will never return.

5. Every moment think steadily as a Roman and a man to do what thou hast in hand with perfect and simple dignity, and feeling of affection, and freedom, and justice; and to give thyself relief from all other thoughts. And thou wilt give thyself relief, if thou doest every act of thy life as if it were the last, laying aside all carelessness and passionate aversion from the commands of reason, and all hypocrisy, and self-love, and discontent with the portion which has been given to thee. Thou seest how few the things are, the which if a man lays hold of, he is able to live a life which flows in quiet, and is like the existence of the gods; for the gods on their part will require nothing more from him who observes these things.

6. Do wrong[1] to thyself, do wrong to thyself, my soul; but thou wilt no longer have the opportunity of honouring thyself. Every man's life is sufficient. But thine is nearly finished, though

[1] Perhaps it should be "Thou art doing violence to thyself," ὑβρίζεις, not ὕβριζε.

thy soul reverences not itself, but places thy felicity in the souls of others.

7. Do the things external which fall upon thee distract thee? Give thyself time to learn something new and good, and cease to be whirled around. But then thou must also avoid being carried about the other way. For those too are triflers who have wearied themselves in life by their activity, and yet have no object to which to direct every movement, and, in a word, all their thoughts.

8. Through not observing what is in the mind of another a man has seldom been seen to be unhappy; but those who do not observe the movements of their own minds must of necessity be unhappy.

9. This thou must always bear in mind, what is the nature of the whole, and what is my nature, and how this is related to that, and what kind of a part it is of what kind of a whole; and that there is no one who hinders thee from always doing and saying the things which are according to the nature of which thou art a part.

10. Theophrastus, in his comparison of bad acts — such a comparison as one would make in accordance with the common notions of mankind — says, like a true philosopher, that the offences which are committed through desire are more blameable than those which are committed through anger. For he who is excited by anger seems to turn away from reason with a certain pain and unconscious contraction; but he who offends through desire, being overpowered by pleasure, seems to be in a manner more intemperate and more womanish in his offences. Rightly then, and in a way worthy of philosophy, he said that the offence which is committed with pleasure is more blameable than that which is committed with pain; and on the whole the one is more like a person who has been first wronged and through pain is compelled to be angry; but the other is moved by his own impulse to do wrong, being carried towards doing something by desire.

11. Since it is possible[1] that thou mayest depart from life this very moment, regulate every act and thought accordingly. But

[1] Or it may mean "since it is in thy power to depart;" which gives a meaning somewhat different.

to go away from among men, if there are gods, is not a thing to be afraid of, for the gods will not involve thee in evil; but if indeed they do not exist, or if they have no concern about human affairs, what is it to me to live in a universe devoid of gods or devoid of providence? But in truth they do exist, and they do care for human things, and they have put all the means in man's power to enable him not to fall into real evils. And as to the rest, if there was anything evil, they would have provided for this also, that it should be altogether in a man's power not to fall into it. Now that which does not make a man worse, how can it make a man's life worse? But neither through ignorance, nor having the knowledge but not the power to guard against or correct these things, is it possible that the nature of the universe has overlooked them; nor is it possible that it has made so great a mistake, either through want of power or want of skill, that good and evil should happen indiscriminately to the good and the bad. But death certainly, and life, honour and dishonour, pain and pleasure, all these things equally happen to good men and bad, being things which make us neither better nor worse. Therefore they are neither good nor evil.

12. How quickly all things disappear, in the universe the bodies themselves, but in time the remembrance of them; what is the nature of all sensible things, and particularly those which attract with the bait of pleasure or terrify by pain, or are noised abroad by vapoury fame; how worthless, and contemptible, and sordid, and perishable, and dead they are — all this it is the part of the intellectual faculty to observe. To observe too who these are whose opinions and voices give reputation; what death is, and the fact that, if a man looks at it in itself, and by the abstractive power of reflection resolves into their parts all the things which present themselves to the imagination in it, he will then consider it to be nothing else than an operation of nature; and if any one is afraid of an operation of nature, he is a child. This, however, is not only an operation of nature, but it is also a thing which conduces to the purposes of nature. To observe too how man comes near to the deity, and by what part of him, and when this part of man is so disposed.

13. Nothing is more wretched than a man who traverses everything in a round, and pries into the things beneath the earth, as the poet says, and seeks by conjecture what is in the minds of his neighbours, without perceiving that it is sufficient to attend to the dæmon within him, and to reverence it sincerely. And reverence of the dæmon consists in keeping it pure from passion and thoughtlessness, and dissatisfaction with what comes from gods and men. For the things from the gods merit veneration for their excellence; and the things from men should be dear to us by reason of kinship; and sometimes even, in a manner, they move our pity by reason of men's ignorance of good and bad; this defect being not less than that which deprives us of the power of distinguishing things that are white and black.

14. Though thou shouldest be going to live three thousand years, and as many times ten thousand years, still remember that no man loses any other life than this which he now lives, nor lives any other than this which he now loses. The longest and shortest are thus brought to the same. For the present is the same to all, though that which perishes is not the same; and so that which is lost appears to be a mere moment. For a man cannot lose either the past or the future: for what a man has not, how can any one take this from him? These two things then thou must bear in mind; the one, that all things from eternity are of like forms and come round in a circle, and that it makes no difference whether a man shall see the same things during a hundred years or two hundred, or an infinite time; and the second, that the longest liver and he who will die soonest lose just the same. For the present is the only thing of which a man can be deprived, if it is true that this is the only thing which he has, and that a man cannot lose a thing if he has it not.

15. Remember that all is opinion. For what was said by the Cynic Monimus is manifest: and manifest too is the use of what was said, if a man receives what may be got out of it as far as it is true.

16. The soul of man does violence to itself, first of all, when it becomes an abscess and, as it were, a tumour on the uinverse, so far as it can. For to be vexed at anything which happens is a

separation of ourselves from nature, in some part of which the natures of all other things are contained. In the next place, the soul does violence to itself when it turns away from any man, or even moves towards him with the intention of injuring, such as are the souls of those who are angry. In the third place, the soul does violence to itself when it is overpowered by pleasure or by pain. Fourthly, when it plays a part, and does or says anything insincerely and untruly. Fifthly, when it allows any act of its own and any movement to be without an aim, and does anything thoughtlessly and without considering what it is, it being right that even the smallest things be done with reference to an end; and the end of rational animals is to follow the reason and the law of the most ancient city and polity.

17. Of human life the time is a point, and the substance is in a flux, and the perception dull, and the composition of the whole body subject to putrefaction, and the soul a whirl, and fortune hard to divine, and fame a thing devoid of judgment. And, to say all in a word, everything which belongs to the body is a stream, and what belongs to the soul is a dream and vapour, and life is a warfare and a stranger's sojourn, and after-fame is oblivion. What then is that which is able to conduct a man? One thing and only one, philosophy. But this consists in keeping the dæmon within a man free from violence and unharmed, superior to pains and pleasures, doing nothing without a purpose, nor yet falsely and with hypocrisy, not feeling the need of another man's doing or not doing anything; and besides, accepting all that happens, and all that is allotted, as coming from thence, wherever it is, from whence he himself came; and, finally, waiting for death with a cheerful mind, as being nothing else than a dissolution of the elements of which every living being is compounded. But if there is no harm to the elements themselves in each continually changing into another, why should a man have any apprehension about the change and dissolution of all the elements? For it is according to nature, and nothing is evil which is according to nature.

This in Carnuntum.[1]

[1] Carnuntum was about thirty miles east of Vindobona (Vienna).

BOOK X. LIFE CONFORMABLE TO NATURE

1. Wilt thou, then, my soul, never be good and simple and one and naked, more manifest than the body which surrounds thee? Wilt thou never enjoy an affectionate and contented disposition? Wilt thou never be full and without a want of any kind, longing for nothing more, nor desiring anything, either animate or inanimate, for the enjoyment of pleasures? nor yet desiring time wherein thou shalt have longer enjoyment, or place, or pleasant climate, or society of men with whom thou mayst live in harmony? but wilt thou be satisfied with thy present condition, and pleased with all that is about thee, and wilt thou convince thyself that thou hast everything and that it comes from the gods, that everything is well for thee, and will be well whatever shall please them, and whatever they shall give for the conservation of the perfect living being, the good and just and beautiful, which generates and holds together all things, and contains and embraces all things which are dissolved for the production of other like things? Wilt thou never be such that thou shalt so dwell in community with gods and men as neither to find fault with them at all, nor to be condemned by them?

2. Observe what thy nature requires, so far as thou art governed by nature only: then do it and accept it, if thy nature, so far as thou art a living being, shall not be made worse by it. And next thou must observe what thy nature requires so far as thou art a living being. And all this thou mayst allow thyself, if thy nature, so far as thou art a rational animal, shall not be made worse by it. But the rational animal is consequently also a political [social] animal. Use these rules, then, and trouble thyself about nothing else.

3. Everything which happens either happens in such wise as thou art formed by nature to bear it, or as thou art not formed by nature to bear it. If, then, it happens to thee in such a way as thou art formed by nature to bear it, do not complain, but bear it as thou art formed by nature to bear it. But if it happens in such wise as thou art not formed by nature to bear it, do not

complain, for it will perish after it has consumed thee. Remember, however, that thou art formed by nature to bear everything, with respect to which it depends on thy own opinion to make it endurable and tolerable, by thinking that it is either thy interest or thy duty to do this.

4. If a man is mistaken, instruct him kindly and show him his error. But if thou art not able, blame thyself, or blame not even thyself.

5. Whatever may happen to thee, it was prepared for thee from all eternity; and the implication of causes was from eternity spinning the thread of thy being, and of that which is incident to it.

6. Whether the universe is [a concourse of] atoms, or nature [is a system], let this first be established, that I am a part of the whole which is governed by nature; next, I am in a manner intimately related to the parts which are of the same kind with myself. For remembering this, inasmuch as I am a part, I shall be discontented with none of the things which are assigned to me out of the whole; for nothing is injurious to the part, if it is for the advantage of the whole. For the whole contains nothing which is not for its advantage; and all natures indeed have this common principle, but the nature of the universe has this principle besides, that it cannot be compelled even by any external cause to generate anything harmful to itself. By remembering, then, that I am a part of such a whole, I shall be content with everything that happens. And inasmuch as I am in a manner intimately related to the parts which are of the same kind with myself, I shall do nothing unsocial, but I shall rather direct myself to the things which are of the same kind with myself, and I shall turn all my efforts to the common interest, and divert them from the contrary. Now, if these things are done so, life must flow on happily, just as thou mayst observe that the life of a citizen is happy, who continues a course of action which is advantageous to his fellow-citizens, and is content with whatever the state may assign to him.

7. The parts of the whole, everything, I mean, which is naturally comprehended in the universe, must of necessity perish; but let this be understood in this sense, that they must undergo

change. But if this is naturally both an evil and a necessity for the parts, the whole would not continue to exist in a good condition, the parts being subject to change and constituted so as to perish in various ways. For whether did nature herself design to do evil to the things which are parts of herself, and to make them subject to evil and of necessity fall into evil, or have such results happened without her knowing it? Both these suppositions, indeed, are incredible. But if a man should even drop the term Nature [as an efficient power], and should speak of these things as natural, even then it would be ridiculous to affirm at the same time that the parts of the whole are in their nature subject to change, and at the same time to be surprised or vexed as if something were happening contrary to nature, particularly as the dissolution of things is into those things of which each thing is composed. For there is either a dispersion of the elements out of which everything has been compounded, or a change from the solid to the earthy and from the airy to the aërial, so that these parts are taken back into the universal reason, whether this at certain periods is consumed by fire or renewed by eternal changes. And do not imagine that the solid and the airy part belong to thee from the time of generation. For all this received its accretion only yesterday and the day before, as one may say, from the food and the air which is inspired. This, then, which has received [the accretion], changes, not that which thy mother brought forth. But suppose that this [which thy mother brought forth] implicates thee very much with that other part, which has the peculiar quality [of change], this is nothing in fact in the way of objection to what is said.

8. When thou hast assumed these names, good, modest, true, rational, a man of equanimity, and magnanimous, take care that thou dost not change these names; and if thou shouldst lose them, quickly return to them. And remember that the term Rational was intended to signify a discriminating attention to every several thing and freedom from negligence; and that Equanimity is the voluntary acceptance of the things which are assigned to thee by the common nature; and that Magnanimity is the elevation of the intelligent part above the pleasurable or painful sensations of

the flesh, and above that poor thing called fame, and death, and all such things. If, then, thou maintainest thyself in the possession of these names, without desiring to be called by these names by others, thou wilt be another person and wilt enter on another life. For to continue to be such as thou hast hitherto been, and to be torn in pieces and defiled in such a life, is the character of a very stupid man and one overfond of his life, and like those half-devoured fighters with wild beasts, who though covered with wounds and gore, still intreat to be kept to the following day, though they will be exposed in the same state to the same claws and bites. Therefore fix thyself in the possession of these few names: and if thou art able to abide in them, abide as if thou wast removed to certain islands of the Happy. But if thou shalt perceive that thou fallest out of them and dost not maintain thy hold, go courageously into some nook where thou shalt maintain them, or even depart at once from life, not in passion, but with simplicity and freedom and modesty, after doing this one [laudable] thing at least in thy life, to have gone out of it thus. In order, however, to the remembrance of these names, it will greatly help thee, if thou rememberest the gods, and that they wish not to be flattered, but wish all reasonable beings to be made like themselves; and if thou rememberest that what does the work of a fig-tree is a fig-tree, and that what does the work of a dog is a dog, and that what does the work of a bee is a bee, and that what does the work of a man is a man.

9. Mimi, war, astonishment, torpor, slavery, will daily wipe out those holy principles of thine. How many things without studying nature dost thou imagine, and how many dost thou neglect? But it is thy duty so to look on and so to do everything, that at the same time the power of dealing with circumstances is perfected, and the contemplative faculty is exercised, and the confidence which comes from the knowledge of each several thing is maintained without showing it, but yet not concealed. For when wilt thou enjoy simplicity, when gravity, and when the knowledge of every several thing, both what it is in substance, and what place it has in the universe, and how long it is formed to exist and of what things it is compounded, and to

whom it can belong, and who are able both to give it and take it away?

10. A spider is proud when it has caught a fly, and another when he has caught a poor hare, and another when he has taken a little fish in a net, and another when he has taken wild boars, and another when he has taken bears, and another when he has taken Sarmatians. Are not these robbers, if thou examinest their opinions?

11. Acquire the contemplative way of seeing how all things change into one another, and constantly attend to it, and exercise thyself about this part [of philosophy]. For nothing is so much adapted to produce magnanimity. Such a man has put off the body, and as he sees that he must, no one knows how soon, go away from among men and leave everything here, he gives himself up entirely to just doing in all his actions, and in everything else that happens he resigns himself to the universal nature. But as to what any man shall say or think about him or do against him, he never even thinks of it, being himself contented with these two things, with acting justly in what he now does, and being satisfied with what is now assigned to him; and he lays aside all distracting and busy pursuits, and desires nothing else than to accomplish the straight course through the law, and by accomplishing the straight course to follow God.

12. What need is there of suspicious fear, since it is in thy power to inquire what ought to be done? And if thou seest clear, go by this way content, without turning back: but if thou dost not see clear, stop and take the best advisers. But if any other things oppose thee, go on according to thy powers with due consideration, keeping to that which appears to be just. For it is best to reach this object, and if thou dost fail, let thy failure be in attempting this. He who follows reason in all things is both tranquil and active at the same time, and also cheerful and collected.

13. Inquire of thyself as soon as thou wakest from sleep whether it will make any difference to thee, if another does what is just and right. It will make no difference.

Thou hast not forgotten, I suppose, that those who assume

arrogant airs in bestowing their praise or blame on others, are such as they are at bed and at board, and thou hast not forgotten what they do, and what they avoid and what they pursue, and how they steal and how they rob, not with hands and feet, but with their most valuable part, by means of which there is produced, when a man chooses, fidelity, modesty, truth, law, a good dæmon [happiness]?

14. To her who gives and takes back all, to nature, the man who is instructed and modest says, Give what thou wilt; take back what thou wilt. And he says this not proudly, but obediently and well pleased with her.

15. Short is the little which remains to thee of life. Live as on a mountain. For it makes no difference whether a man lives there or here, if he lives everywhere in the world as in a state [political community]. Let men see, let them know a real man who lives according to nature. If they cannot endure him, let them kill him. For that is better than to live thus [as men do].

16. No longer talk at all about the kind of man that a good man ought to be, but be such.

17. Constantly contemplate the whole of time and the whole of substance, and consider that all individual things as to substance are a grain of a fig, and as to time, the turning of a gimlet.

18. Look at everything that exists, and observe that it is already in dissolution and in change, and as it were putrefaction or dispersion, or that everything is so constituted by nature as to die.

19. Consider what men are when they are eating, sleeping, generating, easing themselves and so forth. Then what kind of men they are when they are imperious and arrogant, or angry and scolding from their elevated place. But a short time ago to how many they were slaves and for what things; and after a little time consider in what a condition they will be.

20. That is for the good of each thing, which the universal nature brings to each. And it is for its good at the time when nature brings it.

21. "The earth loves the shower;" and "the solemn æther loves:" and the universe loves to make whatever is about to be.

I say then to the universe, that I love as thou lovest. And is not this too said, that "this or that loves [is wont] to be produced?"

22. Either thou livest here and hast already accustomed thyself to it, or thou art going away, and this was thy own will; or thou art dying and hast discharged thy duty. But besides these things there is nothing. Be of good cheer, then.

23. Let this always be plain to thee, that this piece of land is like any other; and that all things here are the same with things on the top of a mountain, or on the sea-shore, or wherever thou choosest to be. For thou wilt find just what Plato says,[1] Dwelling within the walls of a city as in a shepherd's fold on a mountain.

24. What is my ruling faculty now to me? and of what nature am I now making it? and for what purpose am I now using it? is it void of understanding? is it loosed and rent asunder from social life? is it melted into and mixed with the poor flesh so as to move together with it?

25. He who flies from his master is a runaway; but the law is master, and he who breaks the law is a runaway. And he also who is grieved or angry or afraid, is dissatisfied because something has been or is or shall be of the things which are appointed by him who rules all things, and he is Law, and assigns to every man what is fit. He then who fears or is grieved or is angry is a runaway.

26. A man deposits seed in a womb and goes away, and then another cause takes it, and labours on it and makes a child. What a thing from such a material! Again, the child passes food down through the throat, and then another cause takes it and makes perception and motion, and in fine life and strength and other things; how many and how strange! Observe then the things which are produced in such a hidden way, and see the power just as we see the power which carries things downwards and upwards, not with the eyes, but still no less plainly.

27. Constantly consider how all things such as they now are, in time past also were; and consider that they will be the same again. And place before thy eyes entire dramas and stages of the same form, whatever thou hast learned from thy experience or

[1] Plato, *Theæt.* 174 D. E.

from older history; for example, the whole court of Hadrianus, and the whole court of Antoninus, and the whole court of Philippus, Alexander, Crœsus; for all those were such dramas as we see now, only with different actors.

28. Imagine every man who is grieved at anything or discontented to be like a pig which is sacrificed and kicks and screams.

Like this pig also is he who on his bed in silence laments the bonds in which we are held. And consider that only to the rational animal is it given to follow voluntarily what happens; but simply to follow is a necessity imposed on all.

29. Severally on the occasion of everything that thou doest, pause and ask thyself, if death is a dreadful thing because it deprives thee of this.

30. When thou art offended at any man's fault, forthwith turn to thyself and reflect in what like manner thou dost err thyself; for example, in thinking that money is a good thing, or pleasure, or a bit of reputation, and the like. For by attending to this thou wilt quickly forget thy anger, if this consideration also is added, that the man is compelled: for what else could he do? or, if thou art able, take away from him the compulsion.

31. When thou hast seen Satyron the Socratic, think of either Eutyches or Hymen, and when thou hast seen Euphrates, think of Eutychion or Silvanus, and when thou hast seen Alciphron think of Tropæophorus, and when thou hast seen Xenophon think of Crito or Severus, and when thou hast looked on thyself, think of any other Cæsar, and in the case of every one do in like manner. Then let this thought be in thy mind, Where then are those men? Nowhere, or nobody knows where. For thus continuously thou wilt look at human things as smoke and nothing at all; especially if thou reflectest at the same time that what has once changed will never exist again in the infinite duration of time. But thou, in what a brief space of time is thy existence? And why art thou not content to pass through this short time in an orderly way? What matter and opportunity [for thy activity] art thou avoiding? For what else are all these things, except exercises for the reason, when it has viewed carefully and by examination into their nature the things which happen in

life? Persevere then until thou shalt have made these things thy own, as the stomach which is strengthened makes all things its own, as the blazing fire makes flame and brightness out of everything that is thrown into it.

32. Let it not be in any man's power to say truly of thee that thou art not simple or that thou art not good; but let him be a liar whoever shall think anything of this kind about thee; and this is altogether in thy power. For who is he that shall hinder thee from being good and simple? Do thou only determine to live no longer, unless thou shalt be such. For neither does reason allow [thee to live], if thou art not such.

33. What is that which as to this material [our life] can be done or said in the way most conformable to reason? For whatever this may be, it is in thy power to do it or to say it, and do not make excuses that thou art hindered. Thou wilt not cease to lament till thy mind is in such a condition that, what luxury is to those who enjoy pleasure, such shall be to thee, in the matter which is subjected and presented to thee, the doing of the things which are conformable to man's constitution; for a man ought to consider as an enjoyment everything which it is in his power to do according to his own nature. And it is in his power everywhere. Now, it is not given to a cylinder to move everywhere by its own motion, nor yet to water nor to fire, nor to anything else which is governed by nature or an irrational soul, for the things which check them and stand in the way are many. But intelligence and reason are able to go through everything that opposes them, and in such manner as they are formed by nature and as they choose. Place before thy eyes this facility with which the reason will be carried through all things, as fire upwards, as a stone downwards, as a cylinder down an inclined surface, and seek for nothing further. For all other obstacles either affect the body only which is a dead thing; or, except through opinion and the yielding of the reason itself, they do not crush nor do any harm of any kind; for if they did, he who felt it would immediately become bad. Now, in the case of all things which have a certain constitution, whatever harm may happen to any of them, that which is so affected becomes consequently worse; but in the

like case, a man becomes both better, if one may say so, and more worthy of praise by making a right use of these accidents. And finally remember that nothing harms him who is really a citizen, which does not harm the state; nor yet does anything harm the state, which does not harm law [order]; and of these things which are called misfortunes not one harms law. What then does not harm law does not harm either state or citizen.

34. To him who is penetrated by true principles even the briefest precept is sufficient, and any common precept, to remind him that he should be free from grief and fear. For example —

> Leaves, some the wind scatters on the ground —
> So is the race of men.[1]

Leaves, also, are thy children; and leaves, too, are they who cry out as if they were worthy of credit and bestow their praise, or on the contrary curse, or secretly blame and sneer; and leaves, in like manner, are those who shall receive and transmit a man's fame to after-times. For all such things as these "are produced in the season of spring," as the poet says; then the wind casts them down; then the forest produces other leaves in their places. But a brief existence is common to all things, and yet thou avoidest and pursuest all things as if they would be eternal. A little time, and thou shalt close thy eyes; and him who has attended thee to thy grave another soon will lament.

35. The healthy eye ought to see all visible things and not to say, I wish for green things; for this is the condition of a diseased eye. And the healthy hearing and smelling ought to be ready to perceive all that can be heard and smelled. And the healthy stomach ought to be with respect to all food just as the mill with respect to all things which it is formed to grind. And accordingly the healthy understanding ought to be prepared for everything which happens; but that which says, Let my dear children live, and let all men praise whatever I may do, is an eye which seeks for green things, or teeth which seek for soft things.

36. There is no man so fortunate that there shall not be by him when he is dying some who are pleased with what is going to happen. Suppose that he was a good and wise man, will there

[1] Homer's *Iliad*, vi. 146.

not be at last some one to say to himself, Let us at last breathe freely being relieved from this schoolmaster? It is true that he was harsh to none of us, but I perceived that he tacitly condemns us. — This is what is said of a good man. But in our own case how many other things are there for which there are many who wish to get rid of us! Thou wilt consider this then when thou art dying, and thou wilt depart more contentedly by reflecting thus: I am going away from such a life, in which even my associates in behalf of whom I have striven so much, prayed, and cared, themselves wish me to depart, hoping perchance to get some little advantage by it. Why then should a man cling to a longer stay here? Do not however for this reason go away less kindly disposed to them, but preserving thy own character, and friendly and benevolent and mild, and on the other hand not as if thou wast torn away; but as when a man dies a quiet death, the poor soul is easily separated from the body, such also ought thy departure from men to be, for nature united thee to them and associated thee. But does she now dissolve the union? Well, I am separated as from kinsmen, not however dragged resisting, but without compulsion; for this too is one of the things according to nature.

37. Accustom thyself as much as possible on the occasion of anything being done by any person to inquire with thyself, For what object is this man doing this? but begin with thyself, and examine thyself first.

38. Remember that this which pulls the strings is the thing which is hidden within: this is the power of persuasion, this is life, this, if one may so say, is man. In contemplating thyself never include the vessel which surrounds thee and these instruments which are attached about it. For they are like to an axe, differing only in this that they grow to the body. For indeed there is no more use in these parts without the cause which moves and checks them than in the weaver's shuttle, and the writer's pen and the driver's whip.

PLOTINUS
(205-270)

ENNEADES

Translated from the Greek by*
THOMAS TAYLOR

I. ON THE VIRTUES

(I. ii.)

I. SINCE evils are here, and revolve from necessity about this [terrestrial] place, but the soul wishes to fly from evils, it is requisite to fly from hence. What therefore is the flight? To become similar, says Plato, to God. But this will be effected, if we become just and holy, in conjunction with [intellectual] prudence, and in short if we are [truly] virtuous. If therefore we are assimilated through virtue, is it to one who possesses virtue? But to whom are we assimilated? To divinity. Are we then assimilated to that nature which appears to possess the virtues in a more eminent degree, and also to the soul of the world, and to the intellect which is the leader in it, in which there is an admirable wisdom? For it is reasonable to suppose that while we are here, we are assimilated to this intellect. Or is it not in the first place dubious, whether all the virtues are present with this intellect, such as temperance and fortitude, since there is nothing which can be dreadful to it? For nothing externally happens to it, nor does any thing pleasing approach to it, which when not present it may become desirous of possessing, or apprehending. But if it also has an appetite directed to the intelligibles, after which our souls aspire, it is evident that ornament and the virtues are from thence derived to us. Has therefore this intellect these virtues? Or may we not say, it is not reasonable to suppose, that it possesses what are called the political virtues, viz. prudence indeed, about the part that deliberates and consults; fortitude about the

* From Πλωτίνου Ἐννεάδες. Reprinted from *Select works of Plotinus*, translated by Thomas Taylor, London, 1817; *ib.* 1895.

irascible part; temperance, in the agreement and concord of the part that desires, with the reasoning power; and justice, in each of these parts performing its proper office, with respect to governing and being governed. Shall we say therefore, that we are not assimilated to divinity according to the political virtues, but according to greater virtues which employ the same appellation? But if according to others, are we not at all assimilated according to the political virtues? Or is it not absurd that we should not in any respect be assimilated according to these? For rumour also says, that these are divine. We must say, therefore, that we are after a manner assimilated by them; but that the assimilation is according to the greater virtues. In either way, however, it happens that divinity has virtues, though not such as the political.

If, therefore, some one should grant, that though it is not possible to be assimilated according to such virtues as these, since we subsist differently with reference to other virtues, yet nothing hinders but that we by our virtues may be assimilated to that which does not possess virtue. But after what manner? Thus, if any thing is heated by the presence of heat, it is necessary that also should be hot from whence the heat is derived. And if any thing is hot by the presence of fire, it is necessary that fire itself also should be hot by the presence of heat.[1] To the first of these assertions, however, it may be said, that there is heat in fire, but a connascent heat, so that it will follow from analogy, that virtue is indeed adventitious to the soul, but connascent with that nature from whence it is derived by imitation. And with respect to the argument from fire, it may be said that divinity possesses virtue, but that virtue in him is in reality greater than virtue [because it subsists causally]. But if that virtue indeed, of which the soul participates, was the same with that from which it is derived, it would be necessary to speak in this manner. Now, however, the one is different from the other. For neither is the sensible the same with the intelligible house [or with that which is the object of intellectual conception], though it is similar to it. And the sensible house participates of order and ornament;

[1] For *πυρὸς θερμοῦ* here, I read *θερμότητος*.

though there is neither order, nor ornament, nor symmetry, in the productive principle of it in the mind. Thus, therefore, we participate from thence [*i. e.* from divinity] of ornament, order and consent, and these things pertain to virtue, but there consent, ornament and order are not wanted, and therefore divinity has no need of virtue. We are, however, nevertheless assimilated to what he possesses, through the presence of virtue. And thus much for the purpose of showing, that it is not necessary virtue should be there, though we are assimilated to divinity by virtue. But it is also necessary to introduce persuasion to what has been said, and not to be satisfied with compulsion alone.

II. In the first place, therefore, the virtues must be assumed, according to which we say that we are assimilated [to divinity], in order that we may discover the same thing. For that which is virtue with us, being an imitation, is there an archetype as it were, and not virtue. By which we signify that there is a twofold similitude, one of which requires a sameness in the things that are similar, these being such as are equally assimilated from the same thing; but the other being that in which one thing is assimilated to another, but the latter ranks as first, and is not converted to the other, nor is said to be similar to it. Here, therefore, the similitude must be assumed after another manner; since we do not require the same, but rather another form, the assimilation being effected after a different manner. What, therefore, is virtue, both that which is universal, and that which is particular? The discussion, however, will be more manifest by directing our attention to each of the virtues; for thus that which is common, according to which all of them are virtues, will be easily apparent. The political virtues, therefore, of which we have spoken above, truly adorn and render us better, bounding and moderating the desires, and in short the passions, and taking away false opinions from a more excellent nature, by limiting and placing the soul beyond the immoderate and indefinite, and by themselves receiving measure and bound. Perhaps, too, these measures are in soul as in matter, are assimilated to the measure which is in divinity, and possess a vestige of *the best* which is there. For that which is in every respect deprived of measure, being matter, is

entirely dissimilar [to divinity]. But so far as it receives form, so far it is assimilated to him who is without form. But things which are nearer to divinity, participate of him in a greater degree. Soul, however, is nearer to, and more allied to him than body, and therefore participates of him more abundantly, so that appearing as a God, it deceives us, and causes us to doubt whether the whole of it is not divine. After this manner, therefore, these are assimilated.

III. Since, however, Plato indicates that this similitude to God pertains to a greater virtue [than that which is political], let us speak concerning it; in which discussion also, the essence of political virtue will become more manifest, and likewise the virtue which is essentially more excellent, which will in short be found to be different from that which is political. Plato, therefore, when he says that a similitude to God is a flight from terrestrial concerns, and when besides this he does not admit that the virtues belonging to a polity are *simply* virtues, but adds to them the epithet political, and elsewhere calls all the virtues purifications, evidently admits that the virtues are twofold, and that a similitude to divinity is not effected according to political virtue. How, therefore, do we call these purifications? And how being purified, are we especially assimilated to divinity? Shall we say, that since the soul is in an evil condition when mingled with the body, becoming similarly passive and concurring in opinion with it in all things, it will be good and possess virtue, if it neither consents with the body, but energizes alone (and this is to perceive intellectually and to be wise), nor is similarly passive with it (and this is to be temperate), nor dreads a separation from the body (and this is to possess fortitude), but reason and intellect are the leaders (and this will be justice). If any one, however, calls this disposition of the soul, according to which it perceives intellectually, and is thus impassive, a resemblance of God, he will not err. For divinity is pure, and the energy is of such a kind, that the being which imitates it will possess wisdom. What then? Is not divinity also disposed after this manner? Or may we not say that he is not, but that the disposition pertains to the soul; and that soul perceives intellectually, in a way dif-

ferent from divinity? It may also be said, that of the things which subsist with him, some subsist differently from what they do with us, and others are not at all with him. Again, therefore, is intellectual perception with him and us homonymous? By no means; but the one is primary, and that which is derived from him secondary. For as the discourse which is in voice is an imitation of that which is in the soul, so likewise, that which is in the soul, is an imitation of that which is in something else [*i. e.* in intellect]. As, therefore, external discourse is divided and distributed, when compared to that which is in the soul, thus also that which is in the soul, and which is the interpreter of intellectual discourse, is divided when compared with it. Virtue, however, pertains to the soul; but not to intellect, nor to that which is beyond intellect.

VI. . . . Each of the virtues, however, is twofold; for each is both in the intellect and in the soul. And in intellect, indeed, each is not [properly] virtue, but virtue is in soul. What, then, is it in intellect? The energy of intellect, and that which is. But here that which is in another, is virtue derived from thence. For justice itself, and each of the virtues, are not in intellect such as they are here, but they are as it were paradigms. But that which proceeds from each of these into the soul, is virtue. For virtue pertains to a certain thing. But each thing itself pertains to itself, and not to any thing else. With respect to justice, however, if it is the performance of appropriate duty, does it always consist in a multitude of parts? Or does not one kind consist in multitude, when there are many parts of it, but the other is entirely the performance of appropriate duty, though it should be one thing. True justice itself, therefore, is the energy of one thing towards itself, in which there is not another and another. Hence justice in the soul is to energize in a greater degree intellectually. But temperance is an inward conversion to intellect. And fortitude is apathy, according to a similitude of that to which the soul looks, and which is naturally impassive. But soul is impassive from virtue, in order that she may not sympathize with her subordinate associate.

VII. These virtues, therefore, follow each other in the soul,

in the same manner as those paradigms in intellect which are prior to virtue. For there intelligence is wisdom and science; a conversion to itself is temperance; its proper work is the performance of its appropriate duty, and justice; and that which is as it were fortitude is immateriality, and an abiding with purity in itself. In soul, therefore, perception directed to intellect is wisdom and prudence, which are the virtues of the soul. For soul does not possess these in the same manner as intellect. Other things also follow after, similarly in soul. They are likewise consequent to purification, since all the virtues are purifications, and necessarily consist in the soul being purified; for otherwise, no one of them would be perfect. And he indeed, who possesses the greater virtues, has necessarily the less in capacity; but he who possesses the less, has not necessarily the greater. This, therefore, is the life which is the principal and leading aim of a worthy man. But whether he possesses in energy, or in some other way, the less or the greater virtues, must be considered by a survey of each of them; as for instance, of prudence. For if it uses the other virtues, how can it any longer remain what it is? And if also it should not energize? Likewise, it must be considered whether naturally the virtues proceed to a different extent; and *this* temperance measures, but *that* entirely takes away what is superfluous. And in a similar manner in the other virtues, prudence being wholly excited. Or perhaps the worthy man will see to what extent they proceed. And perhaps sometimes according to circumstances he will energize according to some of them. But arriving at the greater virtues, he will perform other measures according to them. Thus, for instance, in the exercise of temperance, he will not measure it by political temperance, but in short he will separate himself as much as possible [from the body], and will live, not merely the life of a good man, which political virtue thinks fit to enjoin, but leaving this, he will choose another life, namely, that of the Gods. For the similitude is to these, and not to good men. The similitude, indeed, to good men, is an assimilation of one image to another, each being derived from the same thing; but a similitude to God, is an assimilation as to a paradigm.

XV. ON THE GOOD, OR THE ONE

(VI. ix.)

III. What then will *the one* be; and what nature will it possess? Or may we not say that it is not at all wonderful, it should not be easy to tell what it is, since neither is it easy to tell what being is, or what form is. But our knowledge is fixed in forms. When, however, the soul directs its attention to that which is formless, then being unable to comprehend that which is not bounded, and as it were impressed with forms by a former of a various nature, it falls from the apprehension of it, and is afraid it will possess [nothing from the view]. Hence, it becomes weary in endeavours of this kind, and gladly descends from the survey frequently falling from all things, till it arrives at something sensible, and as it were rests in a solid substance; just as the sight also, when wearied with the perception of small objects, eagerly converts itself to such as are large. When, however, the soul wishes to perceive by itself, and sees itself alone, then in consequence of being one with the object of its perception, it does not think that it yet possesses that which it investigates, because it is not different from that which it intellectually perceives. At the same time, it is requisite that he should act in this manner, who intends to philosophize about *the one.* Since, therefore, that which we investigate is one, and we direct our attention to the principle of all things, to *the good*, and the first, we ought not to be far removed from the natures which are about the first of things, nor fall from them to the last of all things, but proceeding to such as are first, we should elevate ourselves from sensibles which have an ultimate subsistence. The soul, likewise, should for this purpose be liberated from all vice, in consequence of hastening to *the* [vision of the] *good;* and should ascend to the principle which is in herself, and become one instead of many things, in order that she may survey the principle of all things, and *the one.*

It is requisite, therefore, that the soul of him who ascends to *the good* should then become intellect, and that he should com-

mit his soul to, and establish it in intellect, in order, that what intellect sees, his soul may vigilantly receive, and may through intellect survey *the one;* not employing any one of the senses, nor receiving any thing from them, but with a pure intellect, and with the summit [and as it were, flower] of intellect, beholding that which is most pure. When, therefore, he who applies himself to the survey of a thing of this kind, imagines that there is either magnitude, or figure, or bulk about this nature, he has not intellect for the leader of the vision; because intellect is not naturally adapted to perceive things of this kind, but such an energy is the energy of sense, and of opinion following sense. But in order to perceive *the one*, it is necessary to receive from intellect a declaration of what intellect is able to accomplish. Intellect, however, is able to see either things prior to itself, or things pertaining to itself, or things effected by itself. And the things indeed contained in itself, are pure; but those prior to itself are still purer and more simple; or rather this must be asserted of that which is prior to it. Hence, that which is prior to it, is not intellect, but something more excellent. For intellect is a *certain* one among the number of beings; but that is not a *certain* one, but is prior to every thing. Nor is it being; for being has, as it were, the form of *the one*. But that is formless, and is even without intelligible form. For the nature of *the one* being generative of all things, is not any one of them. Neither, therefore, is it a certain thing, nor a quality, nor a quantity, nor intellect, nor soul, nor that which is moved, nor again that which stands still. Nor is it in place, or in time; but is by itself uniform, or rather without form, being prior to all form, to motion and to permanency. . . .

IV. In this affair, however, a doubt especially arises, because the perception of the highest God is not effected by science, nor by intelligence, like other intelligibles, but by the presence of him, which is a mode of knowledge superior to that of science. But the soul suffers an apostasy from *the one*, and is not entirely one when it receives scientific knowledge. For science is reason, and reason is multitudinous. The soul, therefore, in this case, deviates from *the one*, and falls into number and multitude. Hence it is necessary to run above science, and in no respect to depart

from a subsistence which is profoundly one; but it is requisite to abandon science, the objects of science, every other thing, and every beautiful spectacle. For every thing beautiful is posterior to the supreme, and is derived from him, in the same manner as all diurnal light is derived from the sun. Hence Plato says, he is neither effable, nor to be described by writing. We speak however, and write about him, extending ourselves to him, and exciting others by a reasoning process to the vision of him; pointing out, as it were, the way to him who wishes to behold something [of his ineffable nature]. For doctrine extends as far as to the way and the progression to him. But the vision of him is now the work of one who is solicitous to perceive him. He, however, will not arrive at the vision of him, and will not be affected by the survey, nor will have in himself as it were an amatory passion from the view (which passion causes the lover to rest in the object of his love), nor receive from it a true light, which surrounds the whole soul with its splendour, in consequence of becoming nearer to it; he, I say, will not behold this light, who attempts to ascend to the vision of the supreme while he is drawn downwards by those things which are an impediment to the vision. He will likewise not ascend by himself alone, but will be accompanied by that which will divulse him from *the one*, or rather he will not be himself collected into one. For *the one* is not absent from any thing, and yet is separated from all things; so that it is present, and yet not present with them. But it is present with those things that are able, and are prepared to receive it, so that they become congruous, and as it were pass into contact with it, through similitude and a certain inherent power allied to that which is imparted by *the one*. When, therefore, the soul is disposed in such a way as she was when she came from *the one*, then she is able to perceive it, as far as it is naturally capable of being seen. He, therefore, who has not yet arrived thither, but either on account of the above-mentioned obstacle is deprived of this vision, or through the want of reason which may conduct him to it, and impart faith respecting it; such a one may consider himself as the cause of his disappointment through these impediments, *and should endeavour by separating himself from all things to be alone.*

VI. How, therefore, can we speak of *the one*, and how can we adapt it to intellectual conception? Shall we say that this may be accomplished, by admitting that it is more transcendently one than the monad and a point? For in these, indeed, the soul, taking away magnitude and the multitude of number, ends in that which is smallest, and fixes itself in a certain thing which is indeed indivisible, but which was in a divisible nature, and is in something different from itself. But *the one* is neither in another thing, nor in that which is divisible. Nor is it indivisible in the same way as that which is smallest. For it is the greatest of all things, not in magnitude, but in power. So that it is without magnitude in power. For the natures also which are [immediately] posterior to it, are indivisible in powers, and not in bulk. The principle of all things likewise must be admitted to be infinite, not because he is magnitude or number which cannot be passed over, but because the power of him is incomprehensible. For when you conceive him to be intellect or God, he is more [excellent] than these. And again, when by the dianoetic power you equalize him with *the one*, or conceive him to be God, by recurring to that which is most united in your intellectual perception, he even transcends these appellations. For he is in himself, nor is any thing accidental to him. By that which is sufficient to itself also the unity of his nature may be demonstrated. For it is necessary that the principle of all things should be most sufficient both to other things, and to itself, and that it should also be most unindigent. But every thing which is multitudinous and not one, is indigent; since consisting of many things it is not one. Hence the essence of it requires to be one. But *the one* is not in want of itself. For it is *the one*. Moreover, that which is many, is in want of as many things as it is. And each of the things that are in it, as it subsists in conjunction with others, and is not in itself, is indigent of other things; and thus a thing of this kind exhibits indigence, both according to parts and according to the whole.

If, therefore, it is necessary there should be something which is most sufficient to itself, it is necessary there should be *the one*, which alone is a thing of such a kind, as neither to be indigent with reference to itself, nor with reference to another thing. For

t does not seek after any thing in order that it may be, nor in order that it may be in an excellent condition, nor that it may be there established. For being the cause of existence to other things, and not deriving that which it is from others, nor its happiness, what addition can be made to it external to itself? Hence its happiness, or the excellency of its condition, is not accidental to it. For it is itself [all that is sufficient to itself]. There is not likewise any place for it. For it is not in want of a foundation, as if it were not able to sustain itself. For that which is established in another thing is inanimate, and a falling mass, if it is without a foundation. But other things are established on account of *the one*, through which also they at the same time subsist, and have the place in which they are arranged. That, however, which seeks after place is indigent. But the principle is not indigent of things posterior to itself. The principle, therefore, of all things is unindigent of all things. For that which is indigent, is indigent in consequence of aspiring after its principle. But if *the one* was indigent of any thing it would certainly seek not to be *the one;* so that it would be indigent of its destroyer. Every thing, however, which is said to be indigent, is indigent of a good condition and of that which preserves it. Hence to *the one* nothing is good, and, therefore, neither is the wish for any thing good to it. But it is *super-good.* And it is not good to itself, but to other things, which are able to participate of it. Nor does *the one* possess intelligence, lest it should also possess difference; nor motion. For it is prior to motion and prior to intelligence. For what is there which it will intellectually perceive? Shall we say itself? Prior to intellection, therefore, it will be ignorant, and will be in want of intelligence in order that it may know itself, though it is sufficient to itself. It does not follow, however, that because *the one* does not know itself, and does not intellectually perceive itself, there will be ignorance in it. For ignorance takes place where there is diversity, and when one thing is ignorant of another. That, however, which is *alone* neither knows any thing, nor has any thing of which it is ignorant. But being one, and associating with itself, it does not require the intellectual perception of itself; since neither is it necessary, in order that you

may preserve *the one*, to adapt to it an association with itself. But it is requisite to take away intellectual perception, an association with itself, and the knowledge of itself, and of other things. For it is not proper to arrange it according to the act of perceiving intellectually, but rather according to intelligence. For intelligence does not perceive intellectually, but is the cause of intellectual perception to another thing. Cause, however, is not the same with the thing caused. But the cause of all things is not any one of them. Hence neither must it be denominated that good which it imparts to others; but it is after another manner *the good*, in a way transcending other goods.

IX. . . . The soul, therefore, when in a condition conformable to nature, loves God, wishing to be united to him, being as it were the desire of a beautiful virgin to be conjoined with a beautiful Love. When, however, the soul descends into generation, then being as it were deceived by [spurious] nuptials, and associating herself with another and a mortal Love, she becomes petulant and insolent through being absent from her father. But when she again hates terrene wantonness and injustice, and becomes purified from the defilements which are here, and again returns to her father, then she is affected in the most felicitous manner. And those indeed who are ignorant of this affection, may from terrene love form some conjecture of divine love, by considering how great a felicity the possession of a most beloved object is conceived to be; and also by considering that these earthly objects of love are mortal and noxious, that the love of them is nothing more than the love of images, and that they lose their attractive power because they are not truly desirable, nor our real good, nor that which we investigate. In the intelligible world, however, the true object of love is to be found, with which we may be conjoined, which we may participate, and truly possess, and which is not externally enveloped with flesh. *He however who knows this, will know what I say*, and will be convinced that the soul has then another life. The soul also proceeding to, and having now arrived at the desired end, and participating of deity, will know that the supplier of true life is then present. She will likewise then require nothing farther; for on the contrary,

it will be requisite to lay aside other things, to stop in this alone, and to become this alone, amputating every thing else with which she is surrounded. Hence, it is necessary to hasten our departure from hence, and to be indignant that we are bound in one part of our nature, in order that with the whole of our [true] selves, we may fold ourselves about divinity, and have no part void of contact with him. When this takes place therefore, the soul will both see divinity and herself, as far as it is lawful for her to see him. And she will see herself indeed illuminated, and full of intelligible light; or rather, she will perceive herself to be a pure light, unburthened, agile, and becoming to be a God, or rather being a God, and then shining forth as such to the view. But if she again becomes heavy, she then as it were wastes away.

X. How does it happen, therefore, that the soul does not abide there? Is it not because she has not yet wholly migrated from hence? But she will then, when her vision of deity possesses an uninterrupted continuity, and she is no longer impeded or disturbed in her intuition by the body. That however which sees divinity, is not the thing which is disturbed, but something else; when that which perceives him is at rest from the vision. But it is not then at rest according to a scientific energy, which consists in demonstrations, in credibilities, and a discursive process of the soul. For here vision, and that which sees, are no longer rèason, but greater than and prior to reason. And in reason, indeed, they are as that is which is perceived. He therefore who sees himself, will then, when he sees, behold himself to be such a thing as this, or rather he will be present with himself thus disposed, and becoming simple, will perceive himself to be a thing of this kind. Perhaps, however, neither must it be said that he sees, but that he is the thing seen; if it is necessary to call these two things, *i. e.* the perceiver and the thing perceived. But both are one; though it is bold to assert this. Then, indeed, the soul neither sees, nor distinguishes by seeing, nor imagines that there are two things; but becomes as it were another thing, and not itself. Nor does that which pertains to itself contribute any thing there. But becoming wholly absorbed in deity, she is one, conjoining as it were centre with centre. For here concurring, they

are one; but they are then two when they are separate. For thus also we now denominate that which is another. Hence this spectacle is a thing difficult to explain by words. For how can any one narrate that as something different from himself, which when he sees he does not behold as different, but as one with himself?

XI. This, therefore, is manifested by the mandate of the mysteries, which orders that they shall not be divulged to those who are uninitiated. For as that which is divine cannot be unfolded to the multitude, this mandate forbids the attempt to elucidate it to any one but him who is fortunately able to perceive it. Since, therefore, [in this conjunction with deity] there were not two things, but the perceiver was one with the thing perceived, as not being [properly speaking] vision but union; whoever becomes one by mingling with deity, and afterwards recollects this union, will have with himself an image of it. But he was also himself one, having with respect to himself no difference, nor with respect to other things. For then there was not any thing excited with him who had ascended thither; neither anger, nor the desire of any thing else, nor reason, nor a certain intellectual perception, nor, in short, was even he himself moved, if it be requisite also to assert this; but being as it were in an ecstasy, or energizing enthusiastically, he became established in quiet and solitary union, not at all deviating from his own essence, nor revolving about himself, but being entirely stable, and becoming as it were stability itself. Neither was he then excited by any thing beautiful; but running above the beautiful, he passed beyond even the choir of the virtues. Just as if some one having entered into the interior of the adytum should leave behind all the statues in the temple, which on his departure from the adytum will first present themselves to his view, after the inward spectacle, and the association that was there, which was not with a statue or an image, but with the thing itself [which the images represent], and which necessarily become the second objects of his perception. Perhaps, however, this was not a spectacle, but there was another mode of vision, viz. ecstasy, and an expansion and accession of himself, a desire of contact, rest, and a striving after conjunction, in order to behold what the adytum contains. But nothing will be present

with him who beholds in any other way. The wise prophets, therefore, obscurely signified by these imitations how this [highest] God is seen. But the wise priest understanding the enigma, and having entered into the adytum, obtains a true vision of what is there. If, however, he has not entered, he will conceive this adytum to be a certain invisible thing, and will have a *knowledge* of the fountain and principle, as the principle of things. But when situated there, he will *see* the principle, and will be conjoined with it, by a union of like with like, neglecting nothing divine which the soul is able to possess. Prior to the vision also it requires that which remains from the vision. But that which remains to him who passes beyond all things, is that which is prior to all things. For the nature of the soul will never accede to that which is entirely non-being. But proceeding indeed downwards it will fall into evil; and thus into non-being, yet not into that which is perfect nonentity. Running, however, in a contrary direction, it will arrive not at another thing, but at itself. And thus not being in another thing, it is not on that account in nothing, but is in itself. *To be in itself alone, however, and not in being, is to be in God.* For God also is something which is not essence, but beyond essence. Hence the soul when in this condition associates with him. He, therefore, who perceives himself to associate with God, will have himself the similtude of him. And if he passes from himself as an image to the archetype, he will then have the end of his progression. But when he falls from the vision of God, if he again excites the virtue which is in himself, and perceives himself to be perfectly adorned; he will again be elevated through virtue, proceeding to intellect and wisdom, and afterwards to the principle of all things. *This, therefore, is the life of the Gods, and of divine and happy men, a liberation from all terrene concerns, a life unaccompanied with human pleasures, and a flight of the alone to the alone.*

SAINT AUGUSTINE

(354-430)

THE CITY OF GOD

Translated from the Latin * *by*

MARCUS DODS

BOOK XII. CHAPTER V. EVERY CREATED NATURE GOOD

All natures, then, inasmuch as they are, and have therefore a rank and species of their own, and a kind of internal harmony, are certainly good. And when they are in the places assigned to them by the order of their nature, they preserve such being as they have received. And those things which have not received everlasting being, are altered for better or for worse, so as to suit the wants and motions of those things to which the Creator's law has made them subservient; and thus they tend in the divine providence to that end which is embraced in the general scheme of the government of the universe. So that, though the corruption of transitory and perishable things brings them to utter destruction, it does not prevent their producing that which was designed to be their result. And this being so, God, who supremely is, and who therefore created every being which has not supreme existence (for that which was made of nothing could not be equal to Him, and indeed could not be at all had He not made it), is not to be found fault with on account of the creature's faults, but is to be praised in view of the natures He has made.

CHAPTER VI. THE ORIGIN OF EVIL

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If the further question be asked, what was the efficient cause of the evil will †? — there is none. For what is it which makes the will

* From *De Civitate Dei*, Subiaco, 1467. Reprinted from Augustine's *City of God*, translated by Rev. Marcus Dods, Edinburgh, 1872.

† The discussion here relates to angels but is similarly applied to men.

bad, when it is the will itself which makes the action bad? And consequently the bad will is the cause of the bad action, but nothing is the efficient cause of the bad will. For if anything is the cause, this thing either has or has not a will. If it has, the will is either good or bad. If good, who is so left to himself as to say that a good will makes a will bad. For in this case a good will would be the cause of sin; a most absurd supposition. On the other hand, if this hypothetical thing has a bad will, I wish to know what made it so; and that we may not go on forever, I ask at once, what made the *first* evil will bad? For that is not the first which was itself corrupted by an evil will, but that is the first which was made evil by no other will. For if it were preceded by that which made it evil, that will was first which made the other evil. But if it is replied, "Nothing made it evil; it always was evil," I ask if it has been existing in some nature. For if not, then it did not exist at all; and if it did exist in some nature, then it vitiated and corrupted it, and injured it, and consequently deprived it of good. And therefore the evil will could not exist in an evil nature, but in a nature at once good and mutable, which this vice could injure. For if it did no injury, it was no vice; and consequently the will in which it was, could not be called evil. But if it did injury, it did take it by taking away or diminishing good. And therefore there could not be from eternity, as was suggested, an evil will in that thing in which there had been previously a natural good, which the evil will was able to diminish by corrupting it.

If, then, the evil will was not from eternity, who, I ask, made it? The only thing that can be suggested in reply is, that something which itself had no will, made the will evil. I ask, then, whether this thing was superior, inferior, or equal to it? If superior, then it is better. How, then, has it no will, and not rather a good will? The same reasoning applies if it was equal; for so long as two things have equally a good will, the one cannot produce in the other an evil will. There remains the supposition that that which corrupted the will of the angelic nature which first sinned, was itself an inferior thing without a will. But that thing, be it of the lowest and most earthly kind, is cer-

tainly itself good, since it is a nature and being, with a form and rank of its own in its own kind and order. How, then, can a good thing be the efficient cause of an evil will? How, I say, can good be the cause of evil? For when the will abandons what is above itself, and turns to what is lower, it becomes evil — not because that is evil to which it turns, but because the turning itself is wicked. Therefore it is not an inferior thing which has made the will evil, but it is itself which has become so by wickedly and inordinately desiring an inferior thing. . . . For if we say that the man himself made his will evil, what was the man himself before his will was evil but a good nature created by God, the unchangeable good. Here are two men who, before the temptation, were alike in body and soul, and of whom one yielded to the tempter who persuaded him, while the other could not be persuaded to desire that lovely body which was equally before the eyes of both. Shall we say of the successfully tempted man that he corrupted his own will, since he was certainly good before his will became bad? Then, why did he do so? Was it because his will was a nature, or because it was made of nothing? We shall find that the latter is the case. For if a nature is the cause of an evil will, what else can we say than that evil arises from good, or that good is the cause of evil? And how can it come to pass that a nature, good though mutable, should produce any evil — that is to say, should make the will itself wicked?

CHAPTER VII. EVIL A NEGATION

Let no one, therefore, look for an efficient cause of the evil will; for it is not efficient, but deficient, as the will itself is not an effecting of something, but a defect. For defection from that which supremely is, to that which has less of being — this is to begin to have an evil will. Now, to seek to discover the causes of these defections, — causes, as I have said, not efficient, but deficient, — is as if some one sought to see darkness, or hear silence. Yet both of these are known by us, and the former by means only of the eye, the latter only by the ear; but not by their positive ac-

tuality, but by their want of it. Let no one, then, seek to know from me what I know that I do not know; unless he perhaps wishes to learn to be ignorant of that of which all we know is, that it cannot be known. For those things which are known not by their actuality, but by their want of it, are known, if our expression may be allowed and understood, by not knowing them, that by knowing them they may be not known. For when the eyesight surveys objects that strike the sense, it nowhere sees darkness but where it begins not to see. And so no other sense but the ear can perceive silence, and yet it is only perceived by not hearing. Thus, too, our mind perceives intelligible forms by understanding them; but when they are deficient, it knows them by not knowing them; for "who can understand defects?"

BOOK XIV. CHAPTER VI. THE CHARACTER OF THE HUMAN WILL

But the character of the human will is of moment; because if it is wrong, these motions of the soul will be wrong, but if it is right, they will be not merely blameless, but even praiseworthy. For the will is in them all; yea, none of them is anything else than the will. For what are desire and joy but a volition of consent to the things we wish? And what are fear and sadness but a volition of aversion from the things which we do not wish? But when consent takes the form of seeking to possess the things we wish, this is called desire; and when consent takes the form of enjoying the things we wish, this is called joy. In like manner, when we turn with aversion from that which we do not wish to happen, this volition is termed fear; and when we turn away from that which has happened against our will, this act of will is called sorrow. And generally in respect of all that we seek or shun, as a man's will is attracted or repelled, so it is changed and turned into these different affections. Wherefore the man who lives according to God, and not according to man, ought to be a lover of good, and therefore a hater of evil. And since no one is evil by nature, but whoever is evil is evil by vice, he who lives according

to God ought to cherish towards evil men a perfect hatred,[1] so that he shall neither hate the man because of his vice, nor love the vice because of the man, but hate the vice and love the man. For the vice being cured, all that ought to be loved, and nothing that ought to be hated will remain.

BOOK XIX. CHAPTER IV. THE CHRISTIAN IDEA OF THE SUPREME GOOD AND EVIL

If then, we be asked what the City of God has to say upon these points, and, in the first place, what its opinion regarding the supreme good and evil is, we will reply that life eternal is the supreme good, death eternal the supreme evil, and that to obtain the one and escape the other we must live rightly. And thus it is written, "The just live by faith," [2] for we do not as yet see our good, and must therefore live by faith; neither have we in ourselves power to live rightly, but can do so if He who has given us faith to believe in His help do help us when we believe and pray. As for those who have supposed that the sovereign good and evil are to be found in this life, and have placed it either in the soul or the body, or in both, or, to speak more explicitly, either in pleasure or in virtue, or in both; in repose or in virtue, or in both; in pleasure and repose, or in virtue, or in all combined; in the primary objects of nature, or in virtue, or in both, — all these have, with a marvellous shallowness, sought to find their blessedness in this life and in themselves.

For what flood of eloquence can suffice to detail the miseries of this life? Cicero, in the *Consolation* on the death of his daughter, has spent all his ability in lamentation; but how inadequate was even his ability here? For when, where, how, in this life can these primary objects of nature be possessed so that they may not be assailed by unforeseen accidents? Is the body of the wise man exempt from any pain which may dispel pleasure, from any disquietude which may banish repose? The amputation or decay of the members of the body puts an end to its integrity, de-

[1] Psalm cxxxix, 22. [2] Hab. ii. 4.

formity blights its beauty, weakness its health, lassitude its vigour, sleepiness or sluggishness its activity, — and which of these is it that may not assail the flesh of the wise man? Comely and fitting attitudes and movements of the body are numbered among the prime natural blessings; but what if some sickness makes the members tremble? what if a man suffers from curvature of the spine to such an extent that his hands reach the ground, and he goes upon all-fours like a quadruped? What shall I say of the fundamental blessings of the soul, sense and intellect, of which the one is given for the perception, and the other for the comprehension of truth? But what kind of sense is it that remains when a man becomes deaf and blind? Where are reason and intellect when disease makes a man delirious? . . .

In fine, virtue itself, which is not among the primary objects of nature, but succeeds to them as the result of learning, though it holds the highest place among human good things, what is its occupation save to wage perpetual war with the vices, — not those that are outside of us, but within; not other men's but our own, — a war which is waged especially by that virtue which the Greeks call σωφροσύνη and we temperance,[1] and which bridles carnal lusts, and prevents them from winning the consent of the spirit to wicked deeds? For we must not fancy there is no vice in us, when, as the apostle says, "The flesh lusteth against the spirit";[2] for to this vice there is a contrary virtue, when, as the same writer says, "The spirit lusteth against the flesh." "For these two," he says, "are contrary one to the other, so that you cannot do the things which you would." But what is it we wish to do when we seek to attain the supreme good, unless that the flesh should cease to lust against the spirit, and that there be no vice in us against which the spirit may lust? And as we cannot attain to this in the present life, however ardently we desire it, let us by God's help accomplish at least this, to preserve the soul from succumbing and yielding to the flesh that lusts against it, and to refuse our consent to the perpetration of sin. Far be it from us, then, to fancy that while we are still engaged in this intestine war, we have already found the happiness which we

[1] Cicero, *Tusc. Quaest.* iii. 8. [2] Gal. v. 17.

seek to reach by victory. And who is there so wise that he has no conflict at all to maintain against vices?

What shall I say of that virtue which is called prudence? Is not all its vigilance spent in the discernment of good from evil things, so that no mistake may be admitted about what one should desire and what avoid? And thus it is itself a proof that we are in the midst of evils, or that evils are in us; for it teaches us that it is an evil to consent to sin, and a good to refuse this consent. And yet this evil, to which prudence teaches and temperance enables us not to consent, is removed from this life neither by prudence nor by temperance. And justice, whose office it is to render to every man his due, whereby there is in man himself a certain just order of nature, so that the soul is subjected to God, and the flesh to the soul, and consequently both soul and flesh to God, — does not this virtue demonstrate that it is as yet rather labouring towards its end than resting in its finished work? For the soul is so much the less subjected to God as it is less occupied with the thought of God; and the flesh is so much the less subjected to the spirit as it lusts more vehemently against the spirit. So long, therefore, as we are beset by this weakness, this plague, this disease, how shall we dare to say that we are safe? and if not safe, then how can we be already enjoying our final beatitude?

Then that virtue which goes by the name of fortitude is the plainest proof of the ills of life, for it is these ills which it is compelled to bear patiently. And this holds good, no matter though the ripest wisdom co-exists with it. And I am at a loss to understand how the Stoic philosophers can presume to say that these are no ills, though at the same time they allow the wise man to commit suicide and pass out of this life if they become so grievous that he cannot or ought not to endure them. But such is the stupid pride of these men who fancy that the supreme good can be found in this life, and that they can become happy by their own resources, that their wise man, or at least the man whom they fancifully depict as such, is always happy, even though he become blind, deaf, dumb, mutilated, racked with pains, or suffer any conceivable calamity such as may compel him to make away with himself; and they are not ashamed to call the life that

is beset with these evils happy. O happy life, which seeks the aid of death to end it! If it is happy, let the wise remain in it; but if these ills drive him out of it, in what sense is it happy? Or how can they say that there are not evils which conquer the virtue of fortitude, and force it not only to yield, but so to rave that it in one breath calls life happy and recommends it to be given up? For who is so blind as not to see that if it were happy it would not be fled from? And if they say we should flee from it on account of the infirmities that beset it, why then do they lower their pride and acknowledge that it is miserable? Was it, I would ask, fortitude or weakness which prompted Cato to kill himself? for he would not have done so had he not been too weak to endure Cæsar's victory. Where, then, is his fortitude? It has yielded, it has succumbed, it has been so thoroughly overcome as to abandon, forsake, flee this happy life. Or was it no longer happy? Then it was miserable. How, then, were these not evils which made life miserable, and a thing to be escaped from?

And therefore those who admit that these are evils, as the Peripatetics do, and the Old Academy, the sect which Varro advocates, express a more intelligible doctrine; but theirs also is a surprising mistake, for they contend that this is a happy life which is beset by these evils, even though they be so great that he who endures them should commit suicide to escape them. "Pains and anguish of body," says Varro, "are evils, and so much the worse in proportion to their severity; and to escape them you must quit this life." What life, I pray? This life he says, which is oppressed by such evils. Then it is happy in the midst of these very evils on account of which you say we must quit it? Or do you call it happy because you are at liberty to escape these evils by death? What then, if by some secret judgment of God you were held fast and not permitted to die, nor suffered to live without these evils? In that case, at least, you would say that such a life was miserable. It is soon relinquished, no doubt, but this does not make it not miserable; for were it eternal, you yourself would pronounce it miserable. Its brevity, therefore, does not clear it of misery; neither ought it to be called happiness because it is a brief misery. Certainly there is a mighty

force in these evils which compel a man — according to them, even a wise man — to cease to be a man that he may escape them, though they say, and say truly, that it is as it were the first and strongest demand of nature that a man cherish himself, and naturally therefore avoid death, and should so stand his own friend as to wish and vehemently aim at continuing to exist as a living creature, and subsisting in this union of soul and body. There is a mighty force in these evils to overcome this natural instinct by which death is by every means and with all a man's efforts avoided, and to overcome it so completely that what was avoided is desired, sought after, and if it cannot in any other way be obtained, is inflicted by the man on himself. There is a mighty force in these evils which make fortitude a homicide, — if, indeed, that is to be called fortitude which is so thoroughly overcome by these evils, that it not only cannot preserve by patience the man whom it undertook to govern and defend, but is itself obliged to kill him. The wise man, I admit, ought to bear death with patience, but when it is inflicted by another. If then as these men maintain, he is obliged to inflict it on himself, certainly it must be owned that the ills which compel him to this are not only evils, but intolerable evils.

The life, then, which is either subject to accidents, or likewise environed with evils so considerable and grievous, could never have been called happy, if the men who give it this name had condescended to yield to the truth, and to be conquered by valid arguments, when they inquired after the happy life, inasmuch as they yield to unhappiness, and are overcome by overwhelming evils, when they put themselves to death, and if also they had not fancied that the supreme good was to be found in this mortal life. Indeed the very virtues of this life, which are certainly its best and most useful possessions, are all the more telling proofs of its miseries in proportion as they are helpful against the violence of its dangers, toils, and woes. For if these are true virtues, — and such cannot exist save in those who have true piety, — they do not profess to be able to deliver the men who possess them from all miseries; for true virtues tell no such lies, but they profess that by the hope of the future world this

life, which is miserably involved in the many and great evils of this world, is happy as it is also safe. For if not yet safe, how could it be happy? And therefore the Apostle Paul, speaking not of men without prudence, temperance, fortitude, and justice, but of those whose lives were regulated by true piety, and whose virtues were therefore true, says, "For we are saved by hope: now hope which is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." [1] As, therefore, we are saved, so we are made happy by hope. And as we do not yet possess a present but look for a future salvation, so it is with our happiness, and this "with patience;" for we are encompassed with evils, which we ought patiently to endure. Salvation, such as it shall be in the world to come, shall itself be our final happiness. And this happiness these philosophers refuse to believe in, because they do not see it, and attempt to fabricate for themselves a happines in this life, based upon a virtue which is as deceitful as it is proud.

[1] Rom. viii. 24.

PETER ABÉLARD
(1079-1142)

ETHICS, OR KNOW THYSELF

*Translated from the Latin * by*
EDWARD KENNARD RAND

PROLOGUE

We give the name of moral qualities to those vices or virtues of the mind which dispose us to bad or to good deeds. There are vices or excellencies of the body as well as of the mind, as bodily weakness, or the fortitude which we call strength, laziness or alertness, a limping gait or an erect bearing, blindness or sight. Hence to show the difference of such qualities as these, to the term *vices* we add *of the mind.* These vices, moreover. that are of the mind, are the opposite of the virtues, as injustice is the opposite of justice, idleness of resolution, intemperance of temperance.

CHAPTER I. ON VICE OF THE MIND, SO FAR AS IT AFFECTS MORAL QUALITIES

There are some vices, or excellencies, of the mind which are dissociated from morality, not involving a man's life in either blame or praise, as mental quality or quickness of wit, a poor memory or a good one, ignorance or knowledge. Such traits, since they may fall to the lot of iniquitous as well as of good men, have nothing to do with the formation of moral character and do not make a life disgraceful or honorable. Hence to exclude such qualities, we well added to our previous phrase *vices of the mind,* the words *which dispose the vicious to bad deeds,* that is incline the will to something which it is improper to do or to abandon.

* From Abélard's *Ethica, seu liber dictus, Scito Te Ipsum,* which was first printed in B. Pez's *Thesaurus anecdotorum novissismus,* Aug. Vind. 1721, iii. 2.

CHAPTER II. WHAT THE DIFFERENCE IS BETWEEN SIN AND THE VICE THAT CONDUCES TO EVIL

Now such a vice of the mind is not the same as a sin, nor a sin the same as an evil act. For example, to be wrathful, that is, easily disposed to the perturbation of wrath, is a vice, and inclines the mind to impetuous and irrational action, a thing which is improper. But this vice resides in the mind, prompting it, that is, to wrathful feelings even when it is not stirred unto wrath, just as the quality of lameness from which a man is called lame, resides in him even when he does not show his lameness by walking. In the same way, too, many are disposed by their nature or their bodily constitution to wantonness or to wrath; still they do not thereby sin, in being such, but have therefrom incentive to battle, that by the virtue of temperance they may triumph over themselves and gain the crown, according to the word of Solomon: "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city." For it is not defeat by man but defeat by vice that religion thinks disgraceful. That lot, to be sure, may befall good men too; in so doing, we deviate from ourselves. This victory the Apostle commends to us, saying: "He is not crowned except he strive lawfully." Let him strive, I say, resisting not men so much as vices, lest, forsooth, these impel us to base consent. For though men cease, vices cease not to assail us, so that the more frequent the battle with them, the more dangerous, and the harder the victory, the more glorious. But when men prevail, they bring no disgrace upon our life, save when, in the manner of vices, turning us to vices, as it were, they subject us to a disgraceful consent. If men rule the body, so long as the mind is free, real freedom is not in danger, and we incur no part of vulgar slavery. For it is not to serve man but to serve vice that is disgraceful; it is not bodily servitude but subjection to the vices that disfigures the soul; for whatever is shared by good men and evil men alike has no relation to virtue or to vice.

CHAPTER III. WHAT VICE OF THE MIND IS, AND WHAT IS PROPERLY CALLED SIN

Vice, therefore, is that whereby we are disposed to sin, that is, are inclined to consent to what is improper, namely either to do or to abandon it. But this consent we properly call sin; that is, guilt of the soul, whereby it merits damnation or is indicted before God. For what is that consent save the contempt of God and offence against him? He in truth is that supreme power which is not lessened by any harm, and yet he punishes contempt of himself. Our sin, therefore, is contempt of the Creator, and to sin is to contemn the Creator, that is, not to do for his sake what we believe should for his sake be done by us, or not to abandon for his sake what we believe should be abandoned. Therefore in defining sin negatively, in speaking, that is, of *not* doing or not abandoning what is proper, we manifestly show that there is no substance in sin, which consists in not being rather than in being, just as we may define darkness as the absence of light where the light hid its being.

But perhaps you will say that likewise the will to do an evil deed is sin, indicting us before God, just as the will to do a good deed renders us just, so that just as virtue consists in a good will, so sin in a bad will, and not only in non-existence, but in existence too, like virtue. For as by willing to do what we believe is pleasing to God, we please him, so by willing to do what we believe displeases God, we displease him, and seem to offend or contemn him.

But I say that, if we ponder the matter diligently, we must view it as far different from what it appears. For since we sometimes sin without any evil intent, and since it is the bridling, not the crushing, of the evil will which gives the palm to the struggling, and secures for them material for battle and the crown of glory, this will ought to be called not sin, but a certain necessary infirmity. For suppose this case. A guiltless man has a cruel lord, who is roused to such fury against him that drawing his sword he pursues him with intent to kill. The other, after long

attempting to flee, and doing his best to avoid destruction, at last is compelled against his will to slay him lest he himself be slain. Tell me, reader, whoever you may be, what evil will did he display in this act? In his desire to escape death, naturally, he desired to save his own life. But was this desire evil in any way? "Not that desire," you will say, I suppose, "but that which he had with regard to the slaying of his pursuing master." You answer well and state the matter clearly, if only you could predicate will in the case of which you speak. But, as already said, he acted unwillingly and under compulsion, because, so far as he could, he preserved the other's life, knowing as well that by the act of taking life he endangered himself. How then did he do that of will, which brought his own life into danger?

But if you answer that this too was done of will, since it is clearly from an act of will, the will to escape death, though not the will to slay his master, that he was rightly called to account, we can in no wise refute you; but, as already said, that will is by no means to be condemned as evil whereby, as you say, he wished to escape death, not to slay his master; and yet he did wrong in consenting, although compelled by the fear of death, to the unrighteous act of killing, to which he ought rather to submit than to commit it. He took the sword of himself, he did not receive it from a superior. Hence the Truth says: "All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword;" that is, by this rashness, he incurred the peril of damnation and the death of his own soul. He wished, therefore, as said, to escape death, not to slay his master, but because he consented to slay him, as he should not have done, this unrighteous consent which preceded the slaying, was sin.

CHAPTER X. THAT A MULTITUDE OF GOODS IS NOT BETTER THAN ONE GOOD

Now in act and intention the number of good qualities or good things seems not to be involved. For when we speak of good intention and good action, that, namely, which proceeds from

good intention, only the goodness of the intention is meant; nor is the term *good* retained in the same meaning, so that we may speak of several goods. For when we say that a man is simple and a style is simple, we do not thereby allow that these constitute several simple things, since the term *simple* is used differently in the two cases. Nobody therefore may compel us to allow that when good action is added to good intention that good is superadded to good, as though there were several goods in virtue of which the remuneration should increase, since as has been said, we may not rightly call those things several goods to which the term *good* does not apply in the same way.

CHAPTER XI. THAT GOOD INTENTION MAKES THE ACT GOOD

Intention, manifestly, we declare to be good, that is, right in itself, but action to be good, not that it takes some good into itself, but that it proceeds from good intention. Hence though the same thing may be done by the same man at different times, yet owing to the diversity of his intention, the action is called now good, now bad, and thus is seen to vary with respect to good and bad, just as the proposition *Socrates sits*, or the understanding of the same, varies with respect to true and false, as Socrates now sits and now stands. Now this change and variation in respect to true and false, Aristotle declares, takes place in these as follows; not that the very things that are changed with respect to true and false receive something by their change, but that the subject, that is Socrates, in itself moves, namely from sitting to standing, or conversely.

CHAPTER XII. FOR WHAT CAUSE INTENTION MAY BE CALLED GOOD

There are those who think intention is good or right, as often as one believes that he is acting well and that that which he does pleases God; as those men did who persecuted the martyrs, of

which the Truth declares in the Gospel: "The time cometh that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service." Of the ignorance of such, the Apostle says with compassion: "I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge," that is, they show great fervor and desire in doing those things which they believe please God; but because in this zeal or desire of their hearts they are deceived, their intention is erroneous, nor is the eye of their heart single, that it may see clearly, that is, guard itself from error. The Lord took pains, therefore, when he distinguished acts according to righteous or unrighteous intentions, to call the eye of the mind, that is the intention, *single*, and, so to speak, clear of dirt, that it might see clearly, or conversely, *dark*, when he said: "If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light," that is, if the intention be right, the whole mass of acts which issue thence and which in the fashion of things corporeal may be seen, will be worthy of light, that is good; and so conversely. Intention, therefore, is not to be called good because it seems good, but, further, because it is such as it is esteemed; since forsooth, that to which it tends, if it believes that it is pleasing God, is never deceived in this further estimation of it. Otherwise even the very infidels would perform good acts even as we, since they no less than we believe that by their works they are saved, or are pleasing to God.

THOMAS AQUINAS

(1225-1274)

AQUINAS ETHICUS

Translated from the Latin * *by*

JOSEPH RICKABY

QUESTION LV. OF VIRTUES IN THEIR ESSENCE

ARTICLE I. — *Is human virtue a habit?*

R. Virtue denotes some perfection of a power. The perfection of everything is estimated chiefly in regard to its end: now the end of power is action: hence a power is said to be perfect inasmuch as it is determined to its act. Now there are powers which are determined of themselves to their acts, as the active powers of physical nature. But the rational powers, which are proper to man, are not determined to one line of action, but are open indeterminately to many, and are determined to acts by habits. And therefore human virtues are habits.

§ 3. We are said to merit by a thing in two ways: in one way as by the merit itself, in the same way that we are said to run by running; and in this way we merit by acts. In another way we are said to merit by a thing as by a principle of merit, as we are said to run by motive power; and thus we are said to merit by virtues and habits.

QUESTION LVII. OF THE VARIOUS INTELLECTUAL VIRTUES

ARTICLE I. — *Are speculative habits of intellect virtues?*

R. A habit is called a virtue in two ways: in one way because it produces a readiness for well-doing; in another way because

* From *Summa Theologiae*, Basil., 1485. Reprinted from *Aquinas Ethicus, or the Moral Teaching of St. Thomas*, translated by Joseph Rickaby, S. J., London, Burns and Oates, Ltd., 1896, vol. i.

along with the readiness it produces the use of the same to the actual doing of good. This latter characteristic belongs only to those habits which regard the appetitive faculty: because the appetitive faculty it is that brings about the use of all powers and habits. Since then speculative habits of intellect do not perfect the appetitive faculty, nor regard it at all, but only the intellectual faculty, such habits may indeed be called virtues, inasmuch as they make a readiness to that good work, the consideration of truth, which is the good work of the intellect. They are not however called *virtues* in the second sense of the term, as causing one to put a power or habit to actual good use. For a man is not inclined to use the habit of speculative science by the mere fact of possessing it: he simply has the ability of contemplating the truth in the matters upon which his science turns. But his using the science that he has comes of the motion of his will. And therefore a virtue which perfects the will, as charity or justice, also causes one to make good use of speculative habits.

ARTICLE II. — *Are there only three speculative habits of intellect, namely wisdom, science, and intuition?*

R. The virtue of the speculative intellect is that which perfects the said intellect for the consideration of truth, such being the good work proper to it. Now truth offers itself to consideration in two shapes: in the shape of something known *of itself*, and in the shape of something known *through something else*. What is known of itself is a principle perceived by the intellect at a glance; and therefore the habit that perfects the intellect for the consideration of such truth is called *intellect*, or *intuition*, which is a hold upon principles. The truth that is known through something else is not taken in by the intellect at a glance, but is gathered by inquiry of reason, and stands as the termination of a reasoning process. This may be in two ways: either that the goal is final in some particular kind; or that it is final in respect of all human knowledge. About the latter goal *wisdom* is conversant, which considers the highest causes, and hence is apt to judge and ordain on all points, because a perfect and universal judgment cannot be got except by carrying matters back to their first

causes. *Science*, on the other hand, perfects the intellect in regard of what is a final goal in this or that kind of knowable things; and therefore there are different sciences, according to the different kinds of things to be known, but only one wisdom.

ARTICLE III. — *Is the habit of intellect called* art *a virtue?*

R. Art is nothing else than a right method of doing certain works, the goodness of which works consists not in any disposition of the appetitive powers of man, but in the excellence of the work itself as turned out. It is nothing to the praise of the artificer as such, with what will he goes to work, but what sort of work he produces. Thus then art, properly speaking, is a habit of external activity. And yet it has this point in common with speculative habits, that speculative habits also are occupied with the quality of the things they consider, and not with the quality of the human appetite in regard of those things. So long as the geometrical demonstration is correct, it matters not how the geometer stands in his appetitive faculty, whether he be in joy or in anger, as neither does it matter in the artificer. And therefore art is a virtue on the same footing as speculative habits: that is to say, neither art nor speculative habits produce a good work in actual exercise, for that is proper to the virtue that perfects the appetite, but only in point of preparedness for well-doing.

ARTICLE IV. — *Is prudence a distinct virtue from art?*

R. Art is *a right method of production;* while prudence is *a right method of conduct.* Now *production* and *conduct* differ: for production is an act passing into exterior matter, as building, cutting, and the like; but conduct is an act abiding in the agent, as seeing, willing, and so forth. Prudence then stands to human acts of this latter sort, which are uses of powers and habits, as art stands to exterior productions: each being a perfect method in respect of the operations to which it refers. Now in speculation the perfection and correctness of the procedure depends on the principles whence reason argues. In human acts the ends in view are as the principles in speculation. And therefore for prudence, which is a right method of conduct, it is requisite that a man be

well disposed in respect of the ends and aims of his action; and he is so disposed by having his appetitive faculty right. And therefore for prudence there is required moral virtue, which is the rectification of appetite. The goodness of works of art, on the other hand, is not any goodness of the human appetite, but of the works in themselves; and therefore art does not presume the rectification of appetite. Hence it is that an artist is more praised who does wrong voluntarily than another who does wrong involuntarily: but it is more against prudence to do wrong voluntarily than involuntarily: because rectitude of will is of the essence of prudence, but not of the essence of art.

ARTICLE V. — *Is prudence a virtue necessary to man?*

R. Prudence is a virtue especially necessary to human life. For to live well is to work well, or display a good activity. Now for activity to be good, care must be taken not only of what the agent does, but of how he does it: to wit, that he go to work according to a right election, not by the mere impetus of passion. But since election is of means to the end, rightness of election requires two things, a due end and a proper direction of means to that due end. Now to the due end man is properly disposed by the virtue which perfects the appetitive part of the soul, the object whereof is that which is good and that which ranks as an end. But towards the proper direction of means to a due end a man must be positively disposed by a habit of reason: because deliberation and election, which are about means to the end, are acts of reason. And therefore there must be in the reason some intellectual virtue, whereby the reason may be perfected so as suitably to regard the means to the end; and that virtue is prudence.

§ 1. Artistic goodness is looked for, not in the artist himself, but rather in the thing wrought by art, since art is a right method of production: for production, passing as it does on to exterior matter, is not a perfection of the producer, but of the thing produced. Art then is about matters of production. But the goodness of prudence is looked for in the agent himself, whose action and conduct is his perfection; for prudence is a right method of conduct. And therefore for art it is not requisite that the artist's

own activity should be good, but that he should turn out a good piece of work. And therefore art is not necessary for the artist to live well, but only to make the thing wrought by art good and to preserve the same; but prudence is necessary for a man to live well, not only for him to become good.

QUESTION LVIII. OF THE DISTINCTION OF MORAL VIRTUES FROM INTELLECTUAL

ARTICLE I. — *Is all virtue moral?*

R. We must consider what the (Latin) word *mos* means; for so we shall be able to know what *moral* virtue is. *Mos* has two meanings: sometimes it means *custom;* sometimes it means a sort of *natural* or *quasi-natural inclination* to do a thing. These two meanings are distinguished in Greek, ἔθος, ἦθος. *Moral* virtue is so called from *mos,* inasmuch as the word signifies a certain *natural* or *quasi-natural inclination* to do a thing. And to this meaning the other meaning of *custom* is allied: for custom in a manner turns into nature, and makes an inclination like to that which is natural. But it is manifest that the inclination to act is properly to be attributed to the appetitive faculty, the function whereof is to move the other powers to action. And therefore not every virtue is called *moral,* but that only which is in the appetitive faculty.

ARTICLE II. — *Is moral virtue distinct from intellectual?*

R. Reason is the first principle of all human acts: all other principles obey reason, though in different degrees. Some obey reason's every beck without any contradiction, as do the limbs of the body if they are in their normal state. Hence the Philosopher says that "the soul rules the body with a despotic command," as the master rules the slave, who has no right to contradict. Some authorities have laid it down that all the active principles in man stand in this way subordinate to reason. If that were true, it would suffice for well-doing to have the reason perfect. Hence as virtue is a habit whereby we are perfected towards well-doing, it

would follow that virtue was in reason alone; and thus there would be no virtue but that which is intellectual. Such was the opinion of Socrates, who said that all virtues were modes of prudence. Hence he laid it down that man, while knowledge was present in him, could not sin, but that whoever sinned, sinned through ignorance. This argumentation, however, goes on a false supposition: for the appetitive part is obedient to reason, not to every beck, but with some contradiction. Hence the Philosopher says that "reason commands appetite with a constitutional command," like to that authority which a parent has over his children, who have in some respects the right of contradiction. Hence Augustine says, "Sometimes understanding goes before, and tardy or none the affection that follows after:" inasmuch as, owing to passions or habits in the appetitive faculty, the use of reason on some particular point is impeded. And to this extent it is in some sort true what Socrates said, that "in the presence of knowledge sin is not," provided that the knowledge here spoken of be taken to include the use of reason on the particular point that is matter of choice. Thus then for well-doing it is required that not only reason be well disposed by the habit of intellectual virtue, but also that the appetitive power be well disposed by the habit of moral virtue. As then appetite is distinct from reason, so is moral virtue distinct from intellectual. Hence as appetite is a principle of human action by being in a manner partaker of reason, so a moral habit has the character of a human virtue by being conformable to reason.

ARTICLE III. — *Is the division of virtues into moral and intellectual an exhaustive division?*

R. Human virtue is a habit perfecting man unto well-doing. Now the principle of human acts in man is only twofold, namely, intellect or reason, and appetite. Hence every human virtue must be perfective of one or other of these two principles. If it is perfective of the speculative or practical intellect towards a good human act, it will be intellectual virtue: if it is perfective of the appetitive part, it will be moral virtue.

§ 1. Prudence in its essence is an intellectual virtue: but in its

subject-matter it falls in with the moral virtues, being *a right method of conduct;* and in this respect it is counted among the moral virtues.

§ 2. Continence and perseverance are not perfections of the sensitive appetite, as is evident from this, that in the continent and in the persevering man there are inordinate passions to excess, which would not be the case if the sensitive appetite were perfected by any habit conforming it to reason. But continence, or perseverance, is a perfection of the rational faculty, holding out against passion so as not to be carried away. Nevertheless it falls short of the character and rank of virtue; because that intellectual virtue which makes the reason stand well in moral matters supposes the appetitive faculty to be rightly bent upon the end, which is not the case with the continent and with the persevering man. For no operation proceeding from two powers can be perfect, unless each of the two powers be perfected by the due habit: as there does not follow a perfect action on the part of one acting through an instrument, if the instrument be not well disposed, however perfect be the principal agent. Hence, if the sensitive appetite, which the rational faculty moves, be not perfect, however perfect be the rational faculty itself, still the action ensuing will not be perfect: hence the principle of action will not be a virtue. And therefore continence from pleasures and perseverance in the midst of sorrows are not virtues, but something less than virtue, as the Philosopher says.[1]

§ 3. Faith, hope, and charity are above human virtues; for they are the virtues of man as he is made partaker of divine grace.

ARTICLE IV. — *Can there be moral virtue without intellectual?*

R. Moral virtue may be without some intellectual virtues, as without wisdom, science, and art, but it cannot be without intuition and prudence. Moral virtue cannot be without prudence, because moral virtue is an *elective habit,* making a good election. Now to the goodness of an election two things are requisite: first, a due intention of the end — and that is secured by moral virtue, which inclines the appetitive powers to good in accordance with

[1] Aristotle's *Ethics,* book vii.

reason, which is the due end; secondly, it is required that the person make a right application of means to the end, and this cannot be except by the aid of reason, rightly counselling, judging, and prescribing: all which offices belong to prudence and the virtues annexed thereto. Hence moral virtue cannot be without prudence, and consequently not without intuition either: for by the aid of intuition principles are apprehended, such principles as are naturally knowable, both in speculative and in practical matters. Hence as right reason in matters of speculation, proceeding on principles naturally known, presupposes the intuition of principles, so also does prudence, being right reason applied to conduct, presuppose the same intuition or insight.

§ 2. In a virtuous person it is not necessary for the use of reason to be vigorous on all points, but only in those things that are to be done according to virtue, and to this extent the use of reason is vigorous in all virtuous persons. Hence even they who seem to be simple, and to lack worldly wisdom, may be prudent persons for all that, according to the text: "Be ye wise as serpents and simple as doves." [1]

§ 3. A natural inclination to the good that is in virtue is a beginning of virtue, but it is not perfect virtue. For the more perfect such inclination is, the more dangerous may it prove, unless right reason be conjoined with it, to make a right election of proper means to a due end. Thus a blind horse runs amuck; and the higher its speed, the more it hurts itself.

ARTICLE V. — *Can there be intellectual virtue without moral?*

R. Other intellectual virtues can be without moral virtue, but prudence cannot. The reason is because prudence is right reason applied to conduct, and that not only in general, but also in particular, as actions are particular. But right reason demands preestablished principles, and on them it proceeds. Now in particular matters reason must proceed not only on general but also on particular principles. As for general principles of conduct, man is kept right on these points by his natural insight into principles, whereby he knows that no evil is to be done, or again by some

[1] St. Matt. x. 16.

piece of practical knowledge. But this is not sufficient for reasoning aright in particular cases. For it happens sometimes that a general principle of this sort, ascertained by intuition or by science, is set aside in a particular case by some passion. Thus when desire gets the better of a man, that seems good which he desires, though it be against the general judgment of reason. And therefore as man is disposed by natural insight, or by a habit of science, to hold himself aright in respect of general principles, so, to keep right in respect of particular principles of conduct, which are ends of action, he must be perfected by certain habits that make it in a manner connatural to him to judge rightly of the end. And this is done by moral virtue: for the virtuous man judges rightly of the end that virtue should aim at, because "as each one is, so does the end appear to him." And therefore for prudence, or the application of right reason to conduct, it is requisite for man to have moral virtue.

QUESTION LXI. OF THE CARDINAL VIRTUES

ARTICLE II. — *Are there four cardinal virtues?*

R. The formal principle of virtue is rational good; and that may be considered in two ways — in one way as consisting in the mere consideration of reason; and in that way there will be one principal virtue, which is called *prudence:* in another way according as a rational order is established in some matter, and that, either in the matter of actions, and so there is *justice;* or in the matter of passions, and so there must be two virtues. For rational order must be established in the matter of the passions with regard to their repugnance to reason. Now this repugnance may be in two ways: in one way by passion impelling to something contrary to reason; and for that, passion must be *tempered*, or repressed: hence *temperance* takes its name; in another way by passion holding back from that which reason dictates; and for that, man must put his foot down there where reason places him, not to budge from thence: and so *fortitude* gets its name. And in like manner according to subjects the same number is found. For we observe

a fourfold subject of this virtue whereof we speak: to wit, the part *rational by essence*, which prudence perfects; and the part *rational by participation*, which is divided into three, namely, the *will*, the subject of justice; the *concupiscible* faculty, the subject of temperance; and the *irascible* faculty, the subject of fortitude.

ARTICLE IV. — *Do the four cardinal virtues differ one from another?*

R. The four virtues above-mentioned are differently understood by different authors. Some take them as meaning certain general conditions of the human mind which are found in all virtues, so that *prudence* is nothing else than a certain correctness of discernment in any acts or matters whatsoever; *justice* is a certain rectitude of mind whereby a man does what he ought to do in any matter; *temperance* is a disposition of mind, which sets bounds to all manner of passions or actions, that they may not exceed; while *fortitude* is a disposition of the soul whereby it is strengthened in what is according to reason against all manner of assaults of passion or toil of active labours. This fourfold distinction does not involve any difference of virtuous habits so far as justice, temperance, and fortitude are concerned. For to every virtue by the fact of its being a *habit* there attaches a certain firmness, so that it may not be moved by any impulse to the contrary; and this has been said to be a point of *fortitude*. Also from the fact of its being a *virtue* it has a direction towards good, wherein is involved the notion of something right and due, which was said to be a point of *justice*. Again, by the fact of its being a *moral* virtue partaking in reason, it has that which makes it observe the bounds of reason in all things, and not go beyond, which was said to be a point of *temperance*. Only the having of discretion, which was attributed to *prudence*, seems to be distinguished from the other three points, inasmuch as this belongs to reason essentially so called, whereas the other three involve only a certain participation in reason by way of application thereof to passions or acts. Thus then on the foregoing reckoning, prudence would be a virtue distinct from the other three; but the other three would not be virtues distinct from one another. For it is manifest that

one and the same virtue is at once a *habit*, and a *virtue*, and is *moral*.

Others better understand these four virtues as being determined to special matters, each of them to one matter, so that every virtue which produces that goodness which lies in the consideration of reason, is called *prudence;* and every virtue which produces that goodness which consists in what is due and right in action, is called *justice;* and every virtue which restrains and represses the passions, is called *temperance;* and every virtue which produces a firmness of soul against all manner of sufferings, is called *fortitude*. On this arrangement it is manifest that the aforesaid virtues are different habits, distinct according to the diversity of their objects.

QUESTION LXII. OF THE THEOLOGICAL VIRTUES

ARTICLE I. — *Are there any theological virtues?*

R. By virtue man is perfected unto the acts whereby he is set in the way to happiness. Now there is a twofold happiness of man: one proportionate to human nature, whereunto man can arrive by the principles of his own nature. Another happiness there is exceeding the nature of man, whereunto man can arrive only by a divine virtue involving a certain participation in the Deity, according as it is said that by Christ we are made "partakers of the divine nature." [1] And because this manner of happiness exceeds the capacities of human nature, the natural principles of human action, on which man proceeds to such well-doing as is in proportion with himself, suffice not to direct man unto the aforesaid happiness. Hence there must be superadded to man by the gift of God certain principles, whereby he may be put on the way to supernatural happiness, even as he is directed to his connatural end by natural principles, yet not without the divine aid. Such principles are called *theological virtues:* both because they have God for their object, inasmuch as by them we are directed aright to God; as also because it is

[1] 2 St. Peter, i. 4.

only by divine revelation in Holy Scripture that such virtues are taught.

ARTICLE II. — *Are theological virtues distinct from virtues intellectual and moral?*

R. Habits are specifically distinct according to the formal difference of their objects. But the object of the theological virtues is God Himself, the last end of all things, as He transcends the knowledge of our reason: whereas the object of the intellectual and moral virtues is something that can be comprehended by human reason. Hence theological virtues are specifically distinct from virtues moral and intellectual.

§ 1. The intellectual and moral virtues perfect the intellect and appetite of man according to the capacity of human nature, but the theological virtues supernaturally.

ARTICLE III. — *Are faith, hope, and charity fitly assigned as the theological virtues?*

R. The theological virtues set man in the way of supernatural happiness, as he is directed to his connatural end by a natural inclination. This latter direction is worked out in two ways: first, by way of the reason or intellect, as that power holds in its knowledge the general principles of rational procedure, theoretical and practical, known by the light of nature: secondly, by the rectitude of the will naturally tending to rational good. But both these agencies fall short of the order of supernatural good. Hence for both of them some supernatural addition was necessary to man, to direct him to a supernatural end. On the side of the intellect man receives the addition of certain supernatural principles, which are perceived by divine light; and these are the objects of belief, with which *faith* is conversant. Secondly, there is the will, which is directed to the supernatural end, both by way of an affective movement directed thereto as to a point possible to gain, and this movement belongs to *hope;* and by way of a certain spiritual union, whereby the will is in a manner transformed into that end, which union and transformation is wrought by *charity.* For the appetite of every being has a natural motion and

tendency towards an end connatural to itself; and that movement arises from some sort of conformity of the thing to its end.

§ 2. Faith and hope denote a certain imperfection: because faith is of the things that are seen not, and hope of the things that are possessed not. Hence to have faith in and hope of the things that are amenable to human power, is a falling short of the character of virtue. But to have faith in and hope of the things that are beyond the ability of human nature, transcends all virtue proportionate to man, according to the text: "The weakness of God is stronger than men." [1]

QUESTION LXIII. OF THE CAUSE OF VIRTUES

ARTICLE I. — *Is virtue in us by nature?*

R. As regards sciences and virtues some have laid it down that they are totally from within, meaning that all virtues and sciences naturally pre-exist in the soul, and that discipline and exercise do no more than remove the obstacles to virtue and science, which arise in the soul from the lumpishness of the body, as when iron is polished by filing; and this was the opinion of the Platonists. Others, on the contrary, have said that they are totally from without. Others again have said that in aptitude the sciences and virtues are in us by nature, but not in perfection. So says the Philosopher, and this is the more correct thing to say. In evidence whereof we must consider that a thing is said to be natural to man in two ways: in one way according to the nature of the species, in another way according to the nature of the individual. And because everything has its species according to its form, and is individualized according to its matter: and man's form is his rational soul, and his matter his body; therefore that which belongs to man by virtue of his rational soul is natural to him in point of his species; while that which is natural to him by his having a given complexion of body is natural to him according to his nature as an individual. Now in both these ways a rudimentary phase of virtue is natural to man. First, as regards his specific nature, in this way, that there are by nature in the reason

[1] 1 Cor. i. 25.

of man certain naturally known principles, theoretical and practical, which are seminal principles of virtues intellectual and moral; and again inasmuch as there is in the will a natural craving after the good that is according to reason. Secondly, as regards his individual nature, inasmuch as by conformation of body some are better and some worse disposed to certain virtues: the explanation being this, that the sensitive powers are energies of corresponding parts of the body; and according to the disposition of those parts the said powers are helped or hindered in their operations; and consequently the rational powers also, which these sensitive powers serve, are helped or hindered in like manner. Thus one man has a natural aptitude for knowledge, another for fortitude, another for temperance. And in these ways the virtues, as well intellectual as moral, are in us by nature to the extent of a certain rudimentary aptitude, but not in their perfect completeness: the reason being that nature is limited to one fixed course of action, whereas the perfection of the said virtues does not lead to one fixed course of action, but is varied according to the diversity of matters wherein the virtues operate, and the diversity of circumstances. It appears then that virtues are in us by nature in aptitude, and in a rudimentary phase, but not in their perfection — except the theological virtues, which are wholly from without.

Article II. — § 2. Virtue divinely infused, considered in its perfection, is incompatible with any mortal sin. But virtue humanly acquired is compatible with an act even of mortal sin, because the use of a habit in us is subject to our will. Nor is a habit of acquired virtue destroyed by one act of sin: for the direct contrary of a habit is not an act, but another habit. And therefore, though without grace a man cannot avoid mortal sin so as never to sin mortally, still there is nothing to hinder him from acquiring a habit of virtue, enough to keep him from evil acts for the most part, and especially from those that are very much opposed to reason. There are, however, some mortal sins that man can nowise avoid without grace, to wit, the sins that are directly contrary to the theological virtues which are in us by the gift of grace.

HUGO GROTIUS

(1583-1645)

THE RIGHTS OF WAR AND PEACE

Translated from the Latin by*

ARCHIBALD COLIN CAMPBELL

BOOK I. CHAPTER I. WHAT RIGHT IS

III. As the *Rights of War* is the title, by which this treatise is distinguished, the first inquiry, as it has already been observed, is, whether any war be just, and in the next place, what constitutes the justice of that war. For, in this place, *right* signifies nothing more than what is just, and that, more in a negative than a positive sense; so that *right* is that, which is not unjust. Now anything is unjust, which is repugnant to the nature of society, established among rational creatures. Thus for instance, to deprive another of what belongs to him, merely for one's own advantage, is repugnant to the law of nature, as Cicero observes in the fifth chapter of his third book of Offices; and by way of proof he says that, if the practice were general, all society and intercourse among men must be overturned. Florentinus, the lawyer, maintains that it is impious for one man to form designs against another, as nature has designed a degree of kindred amongst us. On this subject Seneca[1] remarks that, as all the members of the human body agree among themselves, because the preservation of each conduces to the welfare of the whole, so men should forbear from mutual injuries, as they were born for society, which cannot subsist unless all the parts of it are defended by mutual forbearance and good will. But as there is one kind of social tie founded upon an equality, for instance, among brothers, citizens, friends, allies, and another on pre-eminence

* From *De Jure Belli ac Pacis*, Paris, 1625. Reprinted from Hugo Grotius, *The Rights of War and Peace, including the Law of Nature and of Nations*, translated by Rev. A. C. Campbell, Pontefract, 1814.

[1] *De Ira*, lib. ii. cap. xxi.

as Aristotle styles it, subsisting between parents and children, masters and servants, sovereign and subjects, God and men, so justice takes place either among equals, or between the governing and the governed parties, notwithstanding their difference of ranks. The former of these, if I am not mistaken, may be called the right of equality and the latter the right of superiority.

IV. There is another signification of the word *right*, different from this, but yet arising from it, which relates directly to the person. In this sense, right is a moral quality annexed to the person, justly entitling him to possess some particular privilege, or to perform some particular act. The right is annexed to the person, although it sometimes follows the things as in the services of lands, which are called *real* rights, in comparison with those merely personal. Not because these rights are not annexed to persons, but the distinction is made, because they belong to the persons only who possess some particular things. This moral quality, when perfect is called a *faculty* ; when imperfect, an *aptitude*. The former answers to the *act*, and the latter to the *power*, when we speak of natural things.

V. Civilians call a faculty that right, which every man has to his own; but we shall hereafter, taking it in its strict and proper sense, call it a right. This right comprehends the power, that we have over ourselves, which is called liberty, and the power, that we have over others, as that of a father over his children, and of a master over his slaves. It likewise comprehends property, which is either complete or imperfect; of the latter kind is the use or possession of anything without the property, or power of alienating it, or pledges detained by the creditors till payment be made. There is a third signification, which implies the power of demanding what is due, to which the obligation upon the party indebted, to discharge what is owing, corresponds.

VI. *Right* strictly taken, is again twofold, the one, *private* and *inferior*, established for the advantage of each individual, the other, *eminent* and *superior*, as involving the claims, which the state has upon individuals, and their property for the public good. Thus the regal authority is above that of a father and a master, and the sovereign has a greater right over the property of his

subjects, where the public good is concerned, than the owners themselves have. And when the exigencies of the state require a supply every man is more obliged to contribute towards it, than to satisfy his creditors.

VII. Aristotle distinguishes aptitude or capacity by the name of worth or merit, and Michael of Ephesus gives the epithet of suitable or becoming to the equality established by this rule of merit.

IX. There is also a third signification of the word *right*, which has the same meaning as law taken in its most extensive sense, to denote a rule of moral action, obliging us to do what is proper. We say *obliging* us. For the best counsels or precepts, if they lay us under no obligation to obey them, cannot come under the denomination of law or right. Now as to permission, it is no act of the law, but only the silence of the law, it however prohibits any one from impeding another in doing what the law permits. But we have said, the law obliges us to do what is proper, not simply what is just; because, under this notion, right belongs to the substance not only of justice, as we have explained it, but of all other virtues. Yet from giving the name of *right* to that, which is *proper*, a more general acceptation of the word justice has been derived. The best division of right, in this general meaning, is to be found in Aristotle, who, defining one kind to be natural, and the other voluntary, calls it a lawful right in the strictest sense of the word law; and sometimes an instituted right. The same difference is found among the Hebrews, who, by way of distinction, in speaking, call that natural right, *precepts*, and the voluntary right, *statutes:* the former of which the septuagint call διακώματα, and the latter ἐντολάς.

X. *Natural right* is the dictate of right reason, showing the moral turpitude or moral necessity of any act from its agreement or disagreement with a rational nature, and consequently that such an act is either forbidden or commanded by God, the author of nature. The actions, upon which such a dictate is given, are either binding or unlawful in themselves, and therefore necessarily understood to be commanded or forbidden by God. This mark distinguishes natural right, not only from human law, but

from the law, which God himself has been pleased to reveal, called, by some, the voluntary divine right, which does not command or forbid things in themselves either binding or unlawful, but makes them unlawful by its prohibition, and binding by its command. But, to understand natural right, we must observe that some things are said to belong to that right, not properly, but, as the schoolmen say, by way of accommodation. These are not repugnant to natural right, as we have already observed that those things are called *just*, in which there is no injustice. Sometimes also, by a wrong use of the word, those things which reason shows to be proper, or better than things of an opposite kind, although not binding, are said to belong to natural right.

We must further remark, that natural right relates not only to those things that exist independent of the human will, but to many things, which necessarily follow the exercise of that will. Thus property, as now in use, was at first a creature of the human will. But, after it was established, one man was prohibited by the law of nature from seizing the property of another against his will. Wherefore, Paulus the lawyer said, that theft is expressly forbidden by the law of nature. Ulpian condemns it as impious in its own nature; to whose authority that of Euripides may be added, as may be seen in the verses of Helena: "For God himself hates violence, and will not have us grow rich by rapine, but by lawful gains. That abundance, which is the fruits of unrighteousness, is an abomination. The air is common to all men, the earth also, where every man, in the ample enjoyment of his possession, must refrain from doing violence or injury to that of another." [1]

Now the law of nature is so unalterable, that it cannot be changed even by God himself. For although the power of God is infinite, yet there are some things, to which it does not extend. Because the things so expressed would have no true meaning, but imply a contradiction. Thus two and two must make four, nor is it possible to be otherwise; nor, again, can what is intrinsically evil not be evil. And this is Aristotle's meaning, when he says that some things are no sooner named, than we discover

[1] *Helena*, v. 909.

their evil nature. For as the substance of things in their nature and existence depends upon nothing but themselves; so there are qualities inseparably connected with their being and essence. Of this kind is the evil of certain actions, compared with the nature of a reasonable being. Therefore God himself suffers his actions to be judged by this rule, as may be seen in Gen. xviii. 25; Isa. v. 3; Ezek. xviii. 25; Jer. ii. 9; Mich. vi. 2; Rom. ii. 6; iii. 6.

XII. The existence of the law of nature is proved by two kinds of argument, *a priori* and *a posteriori*, the former a more abstruse, and the latter a more popular method of proof. We are said to reason *a priori*, when we show the agreement or disagreement of anything with a reasonable and social nature; but *a posteriori*, when without absolute proof, but only upon probability, anything is inferred to accord with the law of nature, because it is received as such among all, or at least among the more civilized nations, for a general effect can only arise from a general cause. Now scarce any other cause can be assigned for so general an opinion, but the common sense, as it is called, of mankind. There is a passage in Hesiod,[1] which has been much praised, that opinions which have prevailed amongst many nations, must have some foundation. Heraclitus, establishing common reason as the best criterion of truth, says,[2] those things are certain which generally appear so. Among other authorities we may quote Aristotle[3] who says it is a strong proof in our favour, when all appear to agree with what we say and Cicero[4] maintains that the consent of all nations in any case is to be admitted for the law of nature. Seneca[5] is of the same opinion: anything, says he, appearing the same to all men is a proof of its truth. Quintilian[6] says, we hold those things to be true, in which all men agree. We have called them the more civilized nations, and not without reason. For, as Porphyry well observes,[7] some nations are so strange that no fair judgment of human nature can be formed from them, for it would be erroneous. Andronicus the Rhodian says,[8] that with men of

[1] *Opera et Dies*, 763.
[2] Sextus Empiricus, *Adv. Log.*, lib. vii. § 134.
[3] *Ethic. Nicom.*, bk. x.
[4] *Tuscul. Quaest.*, lib. i. cap. xiii.
[5] *Epist.*, cxvii.
[6] *Inst. Orator.*, lib. v. cap. x.
[7] *De abstinentia*, lib. iv.
[8] *Paraph. in Arist. Ethic. Nich.*, lib. v. cap. x.

right and sound understanding, natural justice is unchangeable. Nor does it alter the case, though men of disordered and perverted minds think otherwise. For he who should deny that honey is sweet, because it appears not so to men of a distempered taste, would be wrong. Plutarch too agrees entirely with what has been said, as appears from a passage in his life of Pompey,[1] affirming that man neither was, nor is, by nature a wild unsociable creature. But it is the corruption of his nature which makes him so; yet by acquiring new habits, by changing his place, and way of living, he may be reclaimed to his original gentleness. Aristotle,[2] taking a description of man from his peculiar qualities, makes him an animal of a gentle nature, and in another part of his works,[3] he observes, that in considering the nature of man, we are to take our likeness from nature in its pure, and not in its corrupt state.

XIII. It has already been remarked, that there is another kind of right, which is the *voluntary* [positive or instituted] right, deriving its origin from the will. And this is either human or divine.

XIV. We will begin with the human as more generally known. Now this is either a civil right or a right more or less extensive than the civil right. The civil right is that which is derived from the civil power. The civil power is the sovereign power of the state. A state is a perfect body of free men, united together in order to enjoy common rights and advantages. The less extensive right, and not derived from the civil power itself, although subject to it, is various, comprehending the authority of parents over children, masters over servants and the like. But the law of nations is a more extensive right, deriving its authority from the common consent of all, or at least of many nations.

It was proper to add many, because scarce any right can be found common to all nations, except the law of nature, which itself too is generally called the law of nations. Nay, frequently in one part of the world, that is held for the law of nations which is not so in another. Now this law of nations is proved in the same manner, as the unwritten civil law, that is, by continued use and the testimony of men skilled in the law. For this law, as

[1] Vita Pompei, vol. i. p. 633.
[2] *Topic.*, lib. v. cap. ii.
[3] *Polit.*, lib. i. cap. v.

Dio Chrysostom[1] well observes, is the work of time and custom. And in this we derive great advantage from the writings of eminent historians.

XV. The very meaning of the words divine voluntary right, shows that it springs from the divine will, by which it is distinguished from natural law, which, it has already been observed, is called divine also. This law admits of what Anaxarchus said, as Plutarch relates in the life of Alexander, though without sufficient accuracy, that God does not will a thing because it is just, but that it is just, or binding, because God wills it. Now this law was given either to mankind in general or to one particular people. We find three periods at which it was given by God to the human race, the first of which was immediately after the creation of man, the second upon the restoration of man after the flood, and the third upon that more glorious restoration through Jesus Christ. These three laws undoubtedly bind all men as soon as they come to a sufficient knowledge of them.

[1] Orat lxxvi., *De Consuetudine.*

THOMAS HOBBES

(1588–1679)

LEVIATHAN *

OR THE MATTER, FORM, AND POWER OF A COMMONWEALTH, ECCLESIASTICAL AND CIVIL

PART I.—OF MAN

CHAPTER VI. OF VOLUNTARY MOTIONS; COMMONLY CALLED THE PASSIONS

THERE be in animals, two sorts of *motions* peculiar to them: one called *vital;* begun in generation, and continued without interruption through their whole life; such as are the *course* of the *blood*, the *pulse*, the *breathing*, the *concoction*, *nutrition*, *excretion*, &c., to which motions there needs no help of imagination: the other is *animal motion*, otherwise called *voluntary motion;* as to *go*, to *speak*, to *move* any of our limbs in such manner as is first fancied in our minds. That sense is motion in the organs and interior parts of man's body, caused by the action of the things we see, hear, &c.; and that fancy is but the relics of the same motion, remaining after sense, has been already said in the first and second chapters. And because *going*, *speaking*, and the like voluntary motions, depend always upon a precedent thought of *whither*, *which way*, and *what*, it is evident that the imagination is the first internal beginning of all voluntary motion. And although unstudied men do not conceive any motion at all to be there, where the thing moved is invisible; or the space it is moved in is, for the shortness of it, insensible; yet that doth not hinder but that such motions are. For let a space be never so little, that which is moved over a greater space, whereof that little one is part, must first be moved over that. These small beginnings of motion, within the body of man,

* *Leviathan*, first edition, London, 1651. Reprinted from Hobbes' *English Works*, collected and edited by Sir William Molesworth, London, 1839, vol. iiii.

before they appear in walking, speaking, striking, and other visible actions, are commonly called ENDEAVOUR.

This endeavour, when it is toward something which causes it, is called APPETITE, or DESIRE; the latter being the general name; and the other oftentimes restrained to signify the desire of food, namely *hunger* and *thirst*. And when the endeavour is fromward something, it is generally called AVERSION. These words, *appetite* and *aversion*, we have from the Latins, and they both of them signify the motions, one of approaching, the other of retiring. So also do the Greek words for the same, which are ὁρμή and ἀφορμή. For nature itself does often press upon men those truths, which afterwards, when they look for somewhat beyond nature, they stumble at. For the Schools find in mere appetite to go, or move, no actual motion at all: but because some motion they must acknowledge, they call it metaphorical motion; which is but an absurd speech; for though words may be called metaphorical, bodies and motions cannot.

That which men desire, they are also said to LOVE, and to HATE those things for which they have aversion. So that desire and love are the same thing; save that by desire, we always signify the absence of the object; by love, most commonly the presence of the same. So also by aversion, we signify the absence; and by hate, the presence of the object.

Of appetites and aversions, some are born with men; as appetite of food, appetite of excretion, and exoneration, which may also and more properly be called aversions, from somewhat they feel in their bodies; and some other appetites, not many. The rest, which are appetites of particular things, proceed from experience, and trial of their effects upon themselves or other men. For of things we know not at all, or believe not to be, we can have no further desire than to taste and try. But aversion we have for things, not only which we know have hurt us, but also that we do not know whether they will hurt us, or not.

Those things which we neither desire, nor hate, we are said to *contemn;* CONTEMPT being nothing else but an immobility, or contumacy of the heart, in resisting the action of certain things; and proceeding from that the heart is already moved otherwise,

by other more potent objects; or from want of experience of them.

And because the constitution of a man's body is in continual mutation, it is impossible that all the same things should always cause in him the same appetites and aversions; much less can all men consent, in the desire of almost any one and the same object.

But whatsoever is the object of any man's appetite or desire, that is it which he for his part calleth *good:* and the object of his hate and aversion, *evil;* and of his contempt, *vile* and *inconsiderable.* For these words of good, evil, and contemptible, are ever used with relation to the person that useth them: there being nothing simply and absolutely so; nor any common rule of good and evil, to be taken from the nature of the objects themselves; but from the person of the man, where there is no Commonwealth; or, in a Commonwealth, from the person that representeth it; or from an arbitrator or judge, whom men disagreeing shall by consent set up, and make his sentence the rule thereof.

The Latin tongue has two words, whose significations approach to those of good and evil; but are not precisely the same; and those are *pulchrum* and *turpe.* Whereof the former signifies that, which by some apparent signs promiseth good; and the latter, that which promiseth evil. But in our tongue we have not so general names to express them by. But for *pulchrum* we say in some things, *fair;* in others, *beautiful,* or *handsome,* or *gallant,* or *honourable,* or *comely,* or *amiable;* and for *turpe, foul, deformed, ugly, base, nauseous,* and the like, as the subject shall require; all which words, in their proper places, signify nothing else but the *mien* or countenance, that promiseth good and evil. So that of good there be three kinds; good in the promise, that is *pulchrum;* good in effect, as the end desired, which is called *jucundum, delightful;* and good as the means, which is called *utile, profitable;* and as many of evil: for *evil* in promise, is that they call *turpe;* evil in effect, and end, is *molestum, unpleasant, troublesome;* and evil in the means, *inutile, unprofitable, hurtful.*

As, in sense, that which is really within us, is, as I have said before, only motion, caused by the action of external objects, but in apparence; to the sight, light and colour; to the ear, sound;

to the nostril, odour, etc.: so, when the action of the same object is continued from the eyes, ears, and other organs to the heart, the real effect there is nothing but motion, or endeavour; which consisteth in appetite, or aversion, to or from the object moving. But the apparence, or sense of that motion, is that we either call *delight* or *trouble of mind.*

This motion, which is called appetite, and for the apparence of it *delight* and *pleasure*, seemeth to be a corroboration of vital motion, and a help thereunto; and therefore such things as caused delight were not improperly called *jucunda, a juvando*, from helping or fortifying; and the contrary *molesta, offensive*, from hindering, and troubling the motion vital.

Pleasure, therefore, or *delight* is the apparence, or sense of good; and *molestation* or *displeasure*, the apparence or sense of evil. And consequently all appetite, desire, and love, is accompanied with some delight more or less; and all hatred and aversion, with more or less displeasure and offence.

Of pleasure or delights, some arise from the sense of an object present; and those may be called *pleasures of sense*; the word *sensual*, as it is used by those only that condemn them, having no place till there be laws. Of this kind are all onerations and exonerations of the body; as also all that is pleasant, in the *sight*, *hearing*, *smell*, *taste*, or *touch.* Others arise from the expectation, that proceeds from foresight of the end, or consequence of things; whether those things in the sense please or displease. And these are *pleasures of the mind* of him that draweth those consequences, and are generally called JOY. In the like manner, displeasures are some in the sense, and called PAIN; others in the expectation of consequences, and are called GRIEF.

These simple passions called *appetite*, *desire*, *love*, *aversion*, *hate*, *joy*, and *grief* have their names for divers considerations diversified. As first, when they one succeed another, they are diversly called from the opinion men have of the likelihood of attaining what they desire. Secondly, from the object loved or hated. Thirdly, from the consideration of many of them together. Fourthly, from the alteration or succession itself.

CHAPTER XIII. OF THE NATURAL CONDITION OF MANKIND

Nature hath made men so equal, in the faculties of the body, and mind; as that though there be found one man sometimes manifestly stronger in body, or of quicker mind than another, yet when all is reckoned together, the difference between man and man, is not so considerable, as that one man can thereupon claim to himself any benefit to which another may not pretend, as well as he. For as to the strength of body, the weakest has strength enough to kill the strongest, either by secret machination, or by confederacy with others, that are in the same danger with himself.

And as to the faculties of the mind, setting aside the arts grounded upon words, and especially that skill of proceeding upon general and infallible rules, called science; which very few have, and but in few things; as being not a native faculty born with us; nor attained, as prudence, while we look after somewhat else, I find yet a greater equality amongst men than that of strength. For prudence, is but experience; which equal time, equally bestows on all men, in those things they equally apply themselves unto. That which may perhaps make such equality incredible, is but a vain conceit of one's own wisdom, which almost all men think they have in a greater degree than the vulgar; that is, than all men but themselves, and a few others, whom by fame, or for concurring with themselves, they approve. For such is the nature of men, that howsoever they may acknowledge many others to be more witty, or more eloquent, or more learned; yet they will hardly believe there be many so wise as themselves; for they see their own wit at hand, and other men's at a distance. But this proveth rather that men are in that point equal, than unequal. For there is not ordinarily a greater sign of the equal distribution of anything, than that every man is contented with his share.

From this equality of ability, ariseth equality of hope in the attaining of our ends. And therefore if any two men desire the

same thing, which nevertheless they cannot both enjoy, they become enemies; and in the way to their end, which is principally their own conservation, and sometimes their delectation only, endeavour to destroy or subdue one another. And from hence it comes to pass, that where an invader hath no more to fear, than another man's single power; if one plant, sow, build, or possess a convenient seat, others may probably be expected to come prepared with forces united, to dispossess, and deprive him, not only of the fruit of his labour, but also of his life or liberty. And the invader again is in the like danger of another.

And from this diffidence of one another, there is no way for any man to secure himself, so reasonable as anticipation; that is, by force, or wiles, to master the persons of all men he can, so long, till he see no other power great enough to endanger him: and this is no more than his own conservation requireth, and is generally allowed. Also because there be some, that taking pleasure in contemplating their own power in the acts of conquest, which they pursue farther than their security requires; if others, that otherwise would be glad to be at ease within modest bounds, should not by invasion increase their power, they would not be able, long time, by standing only on their defence, to subsist. And by consequence, such augmentation of dominion over men being necessary to a man's conservation, it ought to be allowed him.

Again, men have no pleasure, but on the contrary a great deal of grief, in keeping company, where there is no power able to overawe them all. For every man looketh that his companion should value him, at the same rate he sets upon himself: and upon all signs of contempt, or undervaluing, naturally endeavours as far as he dares (which amongst them that have no common power to keep them in quiet, is far enough to make them destroy each other), to extort a greater value from his contemners, by damage; and from others, by the example.

So that in the nature of man, we find three principal causes of quarrel. First, competition; secondly, diffidence; thirdly, glory.

The first maketh men invade for gain; the second, for safety; and the third, for reputation. The first use violence, to make

themselves masters of other men's persons, wives, children, and cattle; the second, to defend them; the third, for trifles, as a word, a smile, a different opinion, and any sign of undervalue, either direct in their persons, or by reflection in their kindred, their friends, their nation, their profession, or their name.

Hereby it is manifest, that during the time men live without a common power to keep them all in awe, they are in that condition which is called war; and such a war, as is of every man, against every man. For WAR, consisteth not in battle only, or the act of fighting; but in a tract of time, wherein the will to contend by battle is sufficiently known: and therefore the notion of *time*, is to be considered in the nature of war, as it is in the nature of weather. For as the nature of foul weather, lieth not in a shower or two of rain, but in an inclination thereto of many days together; so the nature of war, consisteth not in actual fighting, but in the known disposition thereto, during all the time there is no assurance to the contrary. All other time is PEACE.

Whatsoever therefore is consequent to a time of war, where every man is enemy to every man, the same is consequent to the time wherein men live without other security, than what their own strength, and their own invention shall furnish them withal. In such condition, there is no place for industry, because the fruit thereof is uncertain, and consequently no culture of the earth; no navigation, nor use of the commodities that may be imported by sea; no commodious building; no instruments of moving, and removing, such things as require much force; no knowledge of the face of the earth; no account of time; no arts; no letters; no society; and, which is worst of all, continual fear, and danger of violent death; and the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short.

It may seem strange to some man, that has not well weighed these things, that Nature should thus dissociate, and render men apt to invade and destroy one another; and he may therefore, not trusting to this inference made from the passions, desire perhaps to have the same confirmed by experience. Let him therefore consider with himself, when taking a journey, he arms himself, and seeks to go well accompanied; when going to sleep he locks

his doors; when even in his house, he locks his chest; and this when he knows there be laws, and public officers, armed, to revenge all injuries shall be done him; what opinion he has of his fellow-subjects, when he rides armed; of his fellow-citizens, when he locks his doors; and of his children and servants, when he locks his chests. Does he not there as much accuse mankind by his actions, as I do by my words? But neither of us accuse man's nature in it. The desires, and other passions of man, are in themselves no sin. No more are the actions, that proceed from those passions, till they know a law that forbids them: which till laws be made they cannot know, nor can any law be made, till they have agreed upon the person that shall make it.

It may peradventure be thought, there was never such a time nor condition of war as this; and I believe it was never generally so, over all the world: but there are many places where they live so now. For the savage people in many places of America, except the government of small families, the concord whereof dependeth on natural lust, have no government at all, and live at this day in that brutish manner, as I said before. Howsoever, it may be perceived what manner of life there would be, where there were no common power to fear, by the manner of life, which men that have formerly lived under a peaceful government, use to degenerate into, in a civil war.

But though there had never been any time, wherein particular men were in a condition of war one against another; yet in all times, kings, and persons of sovereign authority, because of their independency, are in continual jealousies, and in the state and posture of gladiators; having their weapons pointing, and their eyes fixed on one another; that is, their forts, garrisons, and guns upon the frontiers of their kingdoms; and continual spies upon their neighbours; which is a posture of war. But because they uphold thereby the industry of their subjects; there does not follow from it that misery, which accompanies the liberty of particular men.

To this war of every man, against every man, this also is consequent; that nothing can be unjust. The notions of right and wrong, justice and injustice, have there no place. Where there is

no common power, there is no law: where no law, no injustice. Force, and fraud, are in war the two cardinal virtues. Justice, and injustice are none of the faculties neither of the body nor mind. If they were, they might be in a man that were alone in the world, as well as his senses, and passions. They are qualities, that relate to men in society, not in solitude. It is consequent also to the same condition, that there be no propriety, no dominion, no *mine* and *thine* distinct; but only that to be every man's, that he can get; and for so long, as he can keep it. And thus much for the ill condition, which man by mere nature is actually placed in; though with a possibility to come out of it, consisting partly in the passions, partly in his reason.

The passions that incline men to peace, are fear of death; desire of such things as are necessary to commodious living; and a hope by their industry to obtain them. And reason suggesteth convenient articles of peace, upon which men may be drawn to agreement. These articles, are they, which otherwise are called the Laws of Nature: whereof I shall speak more particularly, in the two following chapters.

CHAPTER XIV. OF THE FIRST AND SECOND NATURAL LAWS

The RIGHT OF NATURE, which writers commonly call *jus naturale*, is the liberty each man hath, to use his own power, as he will himself, for the preservation of his own nature; that is to say, of his own life; and consequently, of doing anything which in his own judgment and reason he shall conceive to be the aptest means thereunto.

By LIBERTY, is understood, according to the proper signification of the word, the absence of external impediments: which impediments, may take away part of a man's power to do what he would; but cannot hinder him from using the power left him, according as his judgment and reason shall dictate to him.

A LAW OF NATURE, *lex naturalis*, is a precept or general rule, found out by reason, by which a man is forbidden to do that,

which is destructive of his life, or taketh away the means of preserving the same; and to omit that, by which he thinketh it may be best preserved. For though they that speak of this subject use to confound *jus* and *lex, right* and *law:* yet they ought to be distinguished; because RIGHT consisteth in liberty to do, or to forbear; whereas LAW, determineth, and bindeth to one of them: so that law, and right, differ as much as obligation, and liberty; which in one and the same matter are inconsistent.

And because the condition of man, as hath been declared in the precedent chapter, is a condition of war of every one against every one; in which case every one is governed by his own reason; and there is nothing he can make use of, that may not be a help unto him in preserving his life against his enemies; it followeth, that in such a condition, every man has a right to everything; even to one another's body. And therefore, as long as this natural right of every man to everything endureth, there can be no security to any man, how strong or wise soever he be, of living out the time which Nature ordinarily alloweth men to live. And consequently it is a precept, or general rule of reason, *that every man ought to endeavour peace, as far as he has hope of obtaining it; and when he cannot obtain it, that he may seek, and use, all helps and advantages of war.* The first branch of which rule containeth the first, and fundamental law of Nature; which is *to seek peace, and follow it.* The second, the sum of the right of Nature: which is, *by all means we can, to defend ourselves.*

From this fundamental law of Nature, by which men are commanded to endeavour peace, is derived this second law; *that a man be willing, when others are so too, as far-forth, as for peace, and defence of himself he shall think it necessary to lay down this right to all things; and be contented with so much liberty against other men as he would allow other men against himself.* For as long as every man holdeth this right of doing anything he liketh; so long are all men in the condition of war. But if other men will not lay down their right as well as he; then there is no reason for any one to divest himself of his: for that were to expose himself to prey, which no man is bound to, rather than to dispose himself to peace. This is that law of the Gospel; *whatsoever*

you require that others should do to you, that do ye to them. And that law of all men, *quod tibi fieri non vis, alteri ne feceris.*

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CHAPTER XV. OF OTHER LAWS OF NATURE

From that law of Nature, by which we are obliged to transfer to another, such rights, as being retained, hinder the peace of mankind, there followeth a third; which is this, *that men perform their covenants made:* without which, covenants are in vain, and but empty words; and the right of all men to all things remaining, we are still in the condition of war.

And in this law of Nature, consisteth the fountain and original of JUSTICE. For where no covenant hath preceded, there hath no right been transferred, and every man has right to everything; and consequently, no action can be unjust. But when a covenant is made, then to break it is *unjust:* and the definition of INJUSTICE, is no other than *the not performance of covenant.* And whatsoever is not unjust, is *just.*

But because covenants of mutual trust, where there is a fear of not performance on either part, as hath been said in the former chapter, are invalid; though the original of justice be the making of covenants; yet injustice actually there can be none, till the cause of such fear be taken away; which while men are in the natural condition of war, cannot be done. Therefore before the names of just, and unjust can have place, there must be some coercive power, to compel men equally to the performance of their covenants, by the terror of some punishment, greater than the benefit they expect by the breach of their covenant; and to make good that propriety, which by mutual contract men acquire, in recompense of the universal right they abandon: and such power there is none before the erection of a commonwealth. And this is also to be gathered out of the ordinary definition of justice in the Schools: for they say, that *justice is the constant will of giving to every man his own.* And therefore where there is no *own*, that is no propriety, there is no injustice; and where there is no coercive power erected, that is, where there is no

Commonwealth, there is no propriety; all men having right to all things: therefore where there is no Commonwealth, there nothing is unjust. So that the nature of justice, consisteth in keeping of valid covenants: but the validity of covenants begins not but with the constitution of a civil power, sufficient to compel men to keep them; and then it is also that propriety begins.

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As justice dependeth on antecedent covenant; so does GRATITUDE depend on antecedent grace; that is to say, antecedent free gift: and is the fourth law of Nature; which may be conceived in this form, *that a man which receiveth benefit from another of mere grace, endeavour that he which giveth it, have no reasonable cause to repent him of his good will.* For no man giveth, but with intention of good to himself; because gift is voluntary and of all voluntary acts, the object is to every man his own good; of which if men see they shall be frustrated, there will be no beginning of benevolence, or trust, nor consequently of mutual help; nor of reconciliation of one man to another; and therefore they are to remain still in the condition of *war;* which is contrary to the first and fundamental law of Nature, which commandeth men to *seek peace.* The breach of this law is called *ingratitude;* and hath the same relation to grace, that injustice hath to obligation by covenant.

A fifth law of Nature is COMPLAISANCE; that is to say, *that every man strive to accommodate himself to the rest.* For the understanding whereof, we may consider, that there is in men's aptness to society, a diversity of nature, rising from their diversity of affections; not unlike to that we see in stones brought together for building of an edifice. . . . For seeing every man, not only by right, but also by necessity of nature, is supposed to endeavour all he can, to obtain that which is necessary for his conservation; he that shall oppose himself against it, for things superfluous, is guilty of the war that thereupon is to follow; and therefore doth that, which is contrary to the fundamental law of Nature, which commandeth *to seek peace.* The observers of this law, may be called SOCIABLE, the Latins call them *commodi;* the contrary, *stubborn, insociable, froward, intractable.*

A sixth law of Nature is this, *that upon caution of the future time, a man ought to pardon the offences past of them that repenting, desire it.* For PARDON, is nothing but granting of peace; which though granted to them that persevere in their hostility, be not peace, but fear; yet not granted to them that give caution of the future time, is sign of an aversion to peace; and therefore contrary to the law of Nature.

A seventh is, *that in revenges*, that is, retribution of evil for evil, *men look not at the greatness of the evil past, but the greatness of the good to follow.* Whereby we are forbidden to inflict punishment with any other design, than for correction of the offender, or direction of others. For this law is consequent to the next before it, that commandeth pardon, upon security of the future time. Besides, revenge, without respect to the example, and profit to come, is a triumph or glorying in the hurt of another, tending to no end; for the end is always somewhat to come; and glorying to no end, is vain-glory, and contrary to reason, and to hurt without reason, tendeth to the introduction of war which is against the law of Nature; and is commonly styled by the name of *cruelty.*

And because all signs of hatred, or contempt, provoke to fight; insomuch as most men choose rather to hazard their life, than not to be revenged; we may in the eighth place, for a law of nature, set down this precept, *that no man by deed, word, countenance, or gesture, declare hatred, or contempt of another.* The breach of which law is commonly called *contumely.*

The question who is the better man, has no place in the condition of mere nature; where, as has been shown before, all men are equal. The inequality that now is, has been introduced by the laws civil. I know that Aristotle in the first book of his *Politics*, for a foundation of his doctrine, maketh men by nature, some more worthy to command, meaning the wiser sort, such as he thought himself to be for his philosophy; others to serve, meaning those that had strong bodies, but were not philosophers as he; as if master and servant were not introduced by consent of men, but by difference of wit; which is not only against reason, but also against experience. For there are very few so foolish,

that had not rather govern themselves, than be governed by others: nor when the wise in their own conceit, contend by force, with them who distrust their own wisdom, do they always, or often, or almost at any time, get the victory. If Nature therefore have made them equal, that equality is to be acknowledged: or if nature have made men unequal; yet because men that think themselves equal, will not enter into conditions of peace, but upon equal terms, such equality must be admitted. And therefore for the ninth law of Nature, I put this, *that every man acknowledge another for his equal by nature.* The breach of this precept is *pride.*

On this law dependeth another, *that at the entrance into conditions of peace, no man require to reserve to himself any right, which he is not content should be reserved to every one of the rest.* As it is necessary for all men that seek peace, to lay down certain rights of nature; that is to say, not to have liberty to do all they list: so is it necessary for man's life, to retain some, as right to govern their own bodies; enjoy air, water, motion, ways to go from place to place; and all things else, without which a man cannot live, or not live well. If in this case, at the making of peace, men require for themselves that which they would not have to be granted to others, they do contrary to the precedent law, that commandeth the acknowledgment of natural equality, and therefore also against the law of Nature. The observers of this law are those we call *modest,* and the breakers *arrogant* men. The Greeks call the violation of this law πλεονεξία, that is, a desire of more than their share.

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These are the laws of Nature, dictating peace, for a means of the conservation of men in multitudes; and which only concern the doctrine of civil society. There be other things tending to the destruction of particular men; as drunkenness, and all other parts of intemperance; which may therefore also be reckoned amongst those things which the law of Nature hath forbidden; but are not necessary nor pertinent enough here to be mentioned.

And though this may seem too subtle a deduction of the laws

of Nature to be taken notice of by all men; whereof the most part are too busy in getting food, and the rest too negligent to understand; yet to leave all men inexcusable, they have been contracted into one easy sum, intelligible even to the meanest capacity; and that is, *Do not that to another, which thou wouldst not have done to thyself;* which sheweth him, that he has no more to do in learning the laws of nature, but, when weighing the actions of other men with his own, they seem too heavy, to put them into the other part of the balance, and his own into their place, that his own passions, and self-love, may add nothing to the weight; and then there is none of these laws of Nature that will not appear unto him very reasonable.

The laws of Nature oblige *in foro interno;* that is to say, they bind to a desire they should take place: but *in foro externo;* that is, to the putting them in act, not always. For he that should be modest, and tractable, and perform all he promises, in such time and place where no man else should do so, should but make himself a prey to others, and procure his own certain ruin, contrary to the ground of all laws of Nature, which tend to nature's preservation. And again, he that having sufficient security, that others shall observe the same laws towards him, observes them not himself, seeketh not peace, but war; and consequently the destruction of his nature by violence.

And whatsoever laws bind *in foro interno*, may be broken, not only by a fact contrary to the law, but also by a fact according to it, in case a man think it contrary. For though his action in this case be according to the law, yet his purpose was against the law; which, where the obligation is *in foro interno*, is a breach.

The laws of Nature are immutable and eternal; for injustice, ingratitude, arrogance, pride, iniquity, acception of persons, and the rest, can never be made lawful. For it can never be that war shall preserve life, and peace destroy it.

The same laws, because they oblige only to a desire and endeavour, I mean an unfeigned and constant endeavour, are easy to be observed. For in that they require nothing but endeavour, he that endeavoureth their performance, fulfilleth them; and he that fulfilleth the law, is just.

And the science of them is the true and only moral philosophy. For moral philosophy is nothing else but the science of what is *good*, and *evil*, in the conversation and society of mankind. *Good*, and *evil*, are names that signify our appetites, and aversions; which in different tempers, customs, and doctrines of men, are different: and divers men, differ not only in their judgment, on the senses of what is pleasant, and unpleasant to the taste, smell, hearing, touch, and sight; but also of what is conformable or disagreeable to reason, in the actions of common life. Nay, the same man, in divers times, differs from himself; and one time praiseth, that is, calleth good, what another time he dispraiseth, and calleth evil: from whence arise disputes, controversies, and at last war. And therefore so long as a man is in the condition of mere nature, which is a condition of war, as private appetite is the measure of good and evil: and consequently all men agree on this, that peace is good, and therefore also the way or means of peace, which, as I have shewed before, are *justice*, *gratitude*, *modesty*, *equity*, *mercy*, and the rest of the laws of Nature, are good; that is to say, *moral virtues;* and their contrary *vices*, evil. Now the science of virtue and vice, is moral philosophy; and therefore the true doctrine of the laws of Nature is the true moral philosophy. But the writers of moral philosophy, though they acknowledge the same virtues and vices; yet not seeing wherein consisted their goodness; nor that they come to be praised, as the means of peaceable, sociable, and comfortable living, place them in a mediocrity of passions: as if not the cause, but the degree of daring, made fortitude; or not the cause, but the quantity of a gift, made liberality.

These dictates of reason, men used to call by the name of laws, but improperly: for they are but conclusions, or theorems concerning what conduceth to the conservation and defence of themselves; whereas law, properly, is the word of him that by right hath command over others. But yet if we consider the same theorems, as delivered in the word of God, that by right commandeth all things; then are they properly called laws.

RALPH CUDWORTH

(1617-1688)

A TREATISE CONCERNING ETERNAL AND IMMUTABLE MORALITY*

CHAPTER II. ETERNITY OF GOOD AND EVIL

1. WHEREFORE in the first place, it is a thing which we shall very easily demonstrate, that moral good and evil, just and unjust, honest and dishonest (if they be not mere names without any signification, or names for nothing else, but willed and commanded, but have a reality in respect of the persons obliged to do and avoid them) cannot possibly be arbitrary things, made by will without nature; because it is universally true, that things are what they are, not by will but by nature. As for example, things are white by whiteness, and black by blackness, triangular by triangularity, and round by rotundity, like by likeness, and equal by equality, that is, by such certain natures of their own. Neither can Omnipotence itself (to speak with reverence) by mere will make a thing white or black without whiteness or blackness; that is, without such certain natures, whether we consider them as qualities in the objects without us according to the Peripatetical philosophy, or as certain dispositions of parts in respect of magnitude, figure, site, and motion, which beget these sensations or phantasms of white and black in us. Or, to instance in geometrical figures, Omnipotence itself cannot by mere will make a body triangular, without having the nature and properties of a triangle in it; that is, without having three angles equal to two right ones, nor circular without the nature of a circle; that is, without having a circumference equidistant everywhere from the centre or middle point. Or lastly, to instance in things relative only; Omnipotent Will cannot make things like or equal one to another, without the natures of likeness and equality. The reason whereof is plain,

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because all these things imply a manifest contradiction; that things should be what they are not. And this is a truth fundamentally necessary to all knowledge, that contradictories cannot be true: for otherwise, nothing would be certainly true or false. Now things may as well be made white or black by mere will, without whiteness or blackness, equal and unequal, without equality and inequality, as morally good and evil, just and unjust, honest and dishonest, *debita* and *illicita*, by mere will, without any nature of goodness, justice, honesty. For though the Will of God be the supreme efficient cause of all things, and can produce into being or existence, or reduce into nothing what it pleaseth, yet it is not the formal cause of any thing besides itself, as the schoolmen have determined, in these words, That God himself cannot supply the place of a formal cause: and therefore it cannot supply the formal cause, or nature of justice or injustice, honesty or dishonesty. Now all that we have hitherto said amounts to no more than this, that it is impossible any thing should be by will only, that is, without a nature or entity, or that the nature and essence of anything should be arbitrary.

2. And since a thing cannot be made any thing by mere will without a being or nature, every thing must be necessarily and immutably determined by its own nature, and the nature of things be that which it is, and nothing else. For though the will and power of God have an absolute, infinite, and unlimited command upon the existences of all created things to make them to be, or not to be at pleasure; yet when things exist, they are what they are, this or that, absolutely or relatively, not by will or arbitrary command, but by the necessity of their own nature. There is no such thing as an arbitrarious essence, mode or relation, that may be made indifferently any thing at pleasure: for an arbitrarious essence is a being without a nature, a contradiction, and therefore a non-entity. Wherefore the natures of justice and injustice cannot be arbitrarious things, that may be applicable by will indifferently to any actions or dispositions whatsoever. For the modes of all subsistent beings, and the relations of things to one another, are immutably and necessarily what they are, and not arbitrary, being not by will but by nature.

3. Now the necessary consequence of that which we have hitherto said is this, that it is so far from being true, that all moral good and evil, just and unjust, are mere arbitrary and factitious things, that are created wholly by will; that (if we would speak properly) we must needs say that nothing is morally good or evil, just or unjust by mere will without nature, because every thing is what it is by nature, and not by will. For though it will be objected here, that when God, or civil powers command a thing to be done, that was not before obligatory or unlawful, the thing willed or commanded doth forthwith become obligatory, that which ought to be done by creatures and subjects respectively; in which the nature of moral good or evil is commonly conceived to consist. And therefore if all good and evil, just and unjust be not the creatures of mere will (as many assert), yet at least positive things must needs owe all their morality, their good and evil to mere will without nature: yet notwithstanding, if we well consider it, we shall find that even in positive commands themselves, mere will doth not make the thing commanded just or obligatory, or beget and create any obligation to obedience; but that it is natural justice or equity, which gives to one the right or authority of commanding, and begets in another duty and obligation to obedience. Therefore it is observable, that laws and commands do not run thus, to will that this or that thing shall become just or unjust, obligatory or unlawful; or that men shall be obliged or bound to obey; but only to require that something be done or not done, or otherwise to menace punishment to the transgressors thereof. For it was never heard of, that any one founded all his authority of commanding others, and others' obligation or duty to obey his commands, in a law of his own making, that men should be required, obliged, or bound to obey him. Wherefore since the thing willed in all laws is not that men should be bound or obliged to obey; this thing cannot be the product of the mere will of the commander, but it must proceed from something else; namely, the right or authority of the commander, which is founded in natural justice and equity, and an antecedent obligation to obedience in the subjects; which things are not made by laws, but pre-supposed before all laws to make them valid: and

if it should be imagined, that any one should make a positive law to require that others should be obliged, or bound to obey him, every one would think such a law ridiculous and absurd; for if they were obliged before, then this law would be in vain, and to no purpose; and if they were not before obliged, then they could not be obliged by any positive law, because they were not previously bound to obey such a person's commands: so that obligation to obey all positive laws is older than all laws, and previous or antecedent to them. Neither is it a thing that is arbitrarily made by will, or can be the object of command, but that which either is or is not by nature. And if this were not morally good and just in its own nature before any positive command of God, That God should be obeyed by his creatures, the bare will of God himself could not beget an obligation upon any to do what he willed and commanded, because the natures of things do not depend upon will, being not things that are arbitrarily made, but things that are. To conclude therefore, even in positive laws and commands it is not mere will that obligeth, but the natures of good and evil, just and unjust, really existing in the world.

4. Wherefore that common distinction betwixt things, things naturally and positively good and evil, or (as others express it) betwixt things that are therefore commanded because they are good and just, and things that are therefore good and just, because they are commanded, stands in need of a right explication, that we be not led into a mistake thereby, as if the obligation to do those thetical and positive things did arise wholly from will without nature: whereas it is not the mere will and pleasure of him that commandeth, that obligeth to do positive things commanded, but the intellectual nature of him that is commanded. Wherefore the difference of these things lies wholly in this, That there are some things which the intellectual nature obligeth to of itself, and directly, absolutely and perpetually, and these things are called naturally good and evil; other things there are which the same intellectual nature obligeth to by accident only, and hypothetically, upon condition of some voluntary action either of our own or some other persons, by means whereof those things which were in their own nature indifferent, falling under something that is

absolutely good or evil, and thereby acquiring a new relation to the intellectual nature, do for the time become such things as ought to be done or omitted, being made such not by will but by nature. As for example, To keep faith and perform covenants, is that which natural justice obligeth to absolutely; therefore upon the supposition that any one maketh a promise, which is a voluntary act of his own, to do something which he was not before obliged to by natural justice, upon the intervention of this voluntary act of his own, that indifferent thing promised falling now under something absolutely good, and becoming the matter of promise and covenant, standeth for the present in a new relation to the rational nature of the promiser, and becometh for the time a thing which ought to be done by him, or which he is obliged to do. Not as if the mere will or words and breath of him that covenanteth had any power to change the moral natures of things, or any ethical virtue of obliging; but because natural justice and equity obligeth to keep faith and perform covenants. In like manner natural justice, that is, the rational or intellectual nature, obligeth not only to obey God, but also civil powers, that have lawful authority of commanding, and to observe political order amongst men; and therefore if God or civil powers command any thing to be done that is not unlawful in itself; upon the intervention of this voluntary act of theirs, those things that were before indifferent, become by accident for the time obligatory, such things as ought to be done by us, not for their own sakes, but for the sake of that which natural justice absolutely obligeth to.

And these are the things that are commonly called positively good and evil, just or unjust, such as though they are adiaphorous or indifferent in themselves, yet natural justice obligeth to accidentally, on supposition of the voluntary action of some other person rightly qualified in commanding, whereby they fall into something absolutely good. Which things are not made good or due by the mere will or pleasure of the commander, but by that natural justice which gives him right and authority of commanding, and obligeth others to obey him; without which natural justice, neither covenants nor commands could possibly oblige any one. For the will of another doth no more oblige in

commands, than our own will in promises and covenants. To conclude therefore, things called naturally good and due are such things as the intellectual nature obliges to immediately, absolutely and perpetually, and upon no condition of any voluntary action that may be done or omitted intervening; but those things that are called positively good and due, are such as natural justice or the intellectual nature obligeth to accidentally and hypothetically, upon condition of some voluntary act of another person invested with lawful authority in commanding.

And that it is not the mere will of the commander, that makes these positive things to oblige or become due, but the nature of things, appears evidently from hence, because it is not the volition of every one that obligeth, but of a person rightly qualified and invested with lawful authority; and because the liberty of commanding is circumscribed within certain bounds and limits, so that if any commander go beyond the sphere and bounds that nature sets him, which are indifferent things, his commands will not at all oblige.

5. But if we would speak yet more accurately and precisely, we might rather say, that no positive commands whatsoever do make any thing morally good and evil, just and unjust, which nature had not made such before. For indifferent things commanded, considered materially in themselves, remain still what they were before in their own nature, that is, indifferent, because (as Aristotle speaks) will cannot change nature. And those things that are by nature indifferent, must needs be as immutably so, as those things that are by nature just or unjust, honest or shameful. But all the moral goodness, justice and virtue that is exercised in obeying positive commands, and doing such things as are positive only and to be done for no other cause but because they are commanded, or in respect to political order, consisteth not in the materiality of the actions themselves, but in that formality of yielding obedience to the commands of lawful authority in them. Just as when a man covenanteth or promiseth to do an indifferent thing which by natural justice he was not bound to do, the virtue of doing it consisteth not in the materiality of the action promised, but in the formality of keeping faith and performing covenants.

Wherefore in positive commands, the will of the commander doth not create any new moral entity, but only diversly modifies and determines that general duty or obligation of natural justice to obey lawful authority and keep oaths and covenants, as our own will in promising doth but produce several modifications of keeping faith. And therefore there are no new things just or due made by either of them, besides what was alway by nature such, to keep our own promises, and obey the lawful commands of others.

6. We see then that it is so far from being true, that all moral good and evil, just and unjust (if they be any thing) are made by mere will and arbitrary commands (as many conceive) that it is not possible that any command of God or man should oblige otherwise than by virtue of that which is naturally just. And tho' particular promises and commands be made by will, yet it is not will but nature that obligeth to the doing of things promised and commanded, or makes them such things as ought to be done. For mere will cannot change the moral nature of actions, nor the nature of intellectual beings. And therefore if there were no natural justice, that is, if the rational or intellectual nature in itself were indetermined and unobliged to any thing, and so destitute of all morality, it were not possible that any thing should be made morally good or evil, obligatory or unlawful, or that any moral obligation should be begotten by any will or command whatsoever.

CHAPTER III. IMMUTABILITY OF GOOD AND EVIL

1. But some there are that will still contend, that though it should be granted that moral good and evil, just and unjust do not depend upon any created will, yet notwithstanding they must needs depend upon the arbitrary will of God, because the natures and essences of all things, and consequently all verities and falsities, depend upon the same. For if the natures and essences of things should not depend upon the will of God, it would follow from hence, that something that was not God was independent upon God.

2. And this is plainly asserted by that ingenious philosopher Renatus Des Cartes, who in his answer to the sixth objector against his metaphysical meditations, writes thus: It is a contradiction to say, that the will of God was not from eternity indifferent to all things which are or ever shall be done; because no good or evil, nothing to be believed or done or omitted, can be fixed upon, the idea whereof was in the divine intellect before that his will determined itself to effect that such a thing should be. Neither do I speak this concerning priority of time, but even there was nothing prior in order or by nature, or reason as they call it, so as that that idea of good inclined God to choose one thing rather than another. As for example's sake, he would therefore create the world in time, because that he saw that it would be better so than if he had created it from eternity; neither willed he that the three angles of a triangle should be equal to two right angles, because he knew that it could not be otherwise. But on the contrary, because he would create the world in time, therefore it is better than if he had created it from eternity; and because he would that the three angles of a triangle should necessarily be equal to two right angles, therefore this is true and can be no otherwise; and so of other things. And thus the greatest indifference in God is the greatest argument of his omnipotence.

And again afterward, To him that considers the immensity of God it is manifest, that there can be nothing at all which doth not depend upon him, not only nothing subsisting, but also no order, no law, no reason of truth and goodness.

And when he was again urged by the sixth objector, Could not God cause that the nature of a triangle should not be such? and how, I pray thee, could he from eternity cause that it should not be true, that twice four are eight? He confesseth ingenuously that those things were not intelligible to us; but yet notwithstanding they must be so, because nothing in any sort of being can be, which doth not depend upon God. Which doctrine of Cartesius is greedily swallowed down by some servile followers of his that have lately written of the old philosophy.

3. Perhaps some may make a question for all this, whether Cartesius were any more in earnest in this, than when he elsewhere

goes about to defend the doctrine of transubstantiation by the principles of his new philosophy, because in his Meditations upon the old philosophy (where it is probable he would set down the genuine sense of his own mind more undisguisedly, before he was assaulted by these objectors, and thereby forced to turn himself into several shapes) he affirmeth that the essences of things were eternal and immutable; but being afterward urged by Gassendus with this inconvenience, that then something would be eternal and immutable besides God, and so independent upon God, he doth in a manner unsay it again, and betakes himself to this pitiful evasion, as the poets feign that the fates were indeed fixed by Jupiter, but that when they were fixed, he had obliged himself to the preserving of them; so I do not think that the essences of things, and those mathematical truths which can be known of them, are independent on God; but I think nevertheless that because God so willed, and so ordered, therefore they are immutable and eternal; which is plainly to make them in their own nature mutable. But whether Cartesius were in jest or earnest in this business, it matters not, for his bare authority ought to be no more valued by us than the authority of Aristotle and other ancient philosophers was by him, whom he so freely dissents from.

4. For though the names of things may be changed by any one at pleasure, as that a square may be called a circle, or a cube a sphere; yet that the nature of a square should not be necessarily what it is, but be arbitrarily convertible into the nature of a circle, and so the essence of a circle into the essence of a sphere, or that the self-same body, which is perfectly cubical, without any physical alteration made in it, should by this metaphysical way of transformation of essences, by mere will and command be made spherical or cylindrical; this doth most plainly imply a contradiction, and the compossibility of contradictions destroys all knowledge and the definite natures or notions of things. Nay, that which implies a contradiction is a non-entity, and therefore cannot be the object of divine power. And the reason is the same for all other things, as just and unjust; for everything is what it is immutably by the necessity of its own nature; neither is it any

derogation at all from the power of God to say, that he cannot make a thing to be that which it is not. Then there might be no such thing as knowledge in God himself. God might will that there should be no such thing as knowledge.

5. And as to the being or not being of particular essences, as that God might, if he pleased, have willed that there should be no such thing as a triangle or circle, and therefore nothing demonstrable or knowable of either of them; which is likewise asserted by Cartesius, and those that make the essences of things dependent upon an arbitrary will in God: This is all one as if one should say, that God could have willed, if he had pleased, that neither his own power nor knowledge should be infinite.

6. Now it is certain, That if the natures and essences of all things, as to their being such or such, do depend upon a will of God that is essentially arbitrary, there can be no such thing as science or demonstration, nor the truth of any mathematical or metaphysical proposition be known any otherwise, than by some revelation of the will of God concerning it, and by a certain enthusiastic or fanatic faith and persuasion thereupon, that God would have such a thing to be true or false at such a time, or for so long. And so nothing would be true or false naturally but positively only, all truth and science being mere arbitrarious things. Truth and falsehood would be only names. Neither would there be any more certainty in the knowledge of God himself, since it must wholly depend upon the mutability of a will in him essentially indifferent and undetermin'd; and if we would speak properly according to this hypothesis, God himself would not know or be wise by knowledge or by wisdom, but by will.

7. Wherefore as for that argument, That unless the essences of things and all verities and falsities depend upon the arbitrary will of God, there would be something that was not God, independent upon God; if it be well consider'd, it will prove a mere bugbear, and nothing so terrible and formidable as Cartesius seemed to think it. For there is no other genuine consequence deducible from this assertion, That the essences and verities of things are independent upon the will of God, but that there is an eternal and immutable wisdom in the mind of God, and thence participated

by created beings independent upon the will of God. Now the wisdom of God is as much God as the will of God; and whether of these two things in God, that is, will or wisdom, should depend upon the other, will be best determined from the several natures of them. For wisdom in itself hath the nature of a rule and measure, it being a most determinate and inflexible thing; but will being not only a blind and dark thing, as consider'd in itself, but also indefinite and indeterminate, hath therefore the nature of a thing regulable and measurable. Wherefore it is the perfection of will, as such, to be guided and determined by wisdom and truth; but to make wisdom, knowledge and truth, to be arbitrarily determined by will, and to be regulated by such a plumbean and flexible rule as that is, is quite to destroy the nature of it; for science or knowledge is the comprehension of that which necessarily is, and there can be nothing more contradictious than truth and falsehood arbitrary. Now all the knowledge and wisdom that is in creatures, whether angels or men, is nothing else but a participation of that one eternal, immutable and increated wisdom of God, or several signatures of that one archetypal seal, or like so many multiplied reflections of one and the same face, made in several glasses, whereof some are clearer, some obscurer, some standing nearer, some further off.

8. Moreover, it was the opinion of the wisest of the philosophers (as we shall show afterward) that there is also in the scale of being a nature of goodness superior to wisdom, which therefore measures and determines the wisdom of God, as his wisdom measures and determines his will, and which the ancient Cabalists were wont to call כתר, a Crown, as being the top or crown of the Deity, of which more afterward. Wherefore altho' some novelists make a contracted idea of God, consisting of nothing else but will and power; yet his nature is better expressed by some in this mystical or enigmatical representation of an infinite circle, whose inmost center is simple goodness, the rays and expanded plat thereof, all comprehending and immutable wisdom, the exterior periphery or interminate circumference, omnipotent will or activity, by which every thing without god is brought forth into existence. Wherefore the will and power of God have no

command inwardly either upon the wisdom and knowledge of God, or upon the ethical and moral disposition of his nature, which is his essential goodness; but the sphere of its activity is without God, where it hath an absolute command upon the existences of things; and is always free, tho' not always indifferent, since it is its greatest perfection to be determined by infinite wisdom and infinite goodness. But this is to anticipate what according to the laws of method should follow afterward in another place.

HENRY MORE

(1614-1687)

ENCHIRIDION ETHICUM

*Translated from the Latin * by*
EDWARD KENNARD RAND

CHAPTER I. WHAT ETHICS IS

Ethics is the art of living well and happily. By *art* I understand a methodical comprehension of homogeneous precepts. And consequently since the art which we treat here is ethical, it is necessary that all the precepts should be really ethical, and should rightly lead to the attainment of its end, otherwise they would not be homogeneous. Hence no precepts are here to be expected which conduce to unprofitable disputation, but those only which are serviceable for the right ordering of life.

CHAPTER II. ON THE DIVISIONS OF ETHICS AND ON HAPPINESS

Ethics consists of two parts, the knowledge of happiness and its attainment. This knowledge embraces the doctrine of the nature of happiness, and of those things which its nature to some extent at least touches or includes. Wherefore in this first part we must treat especially the *virtues* and the *passions*, and lastly add something on external goods.

Happiness is the pleasure which the mind receives from the sense of virtue and from the consciousness of deeds done rightly and according to the norm of virtue. Therefore a moderate share, at least, of so-called external goods conduces to perfect happiness.

. . . . . .

* From Henry More's *Enchiridion Ethicum*, London, 1667.

CHAPTER III. ON VIRTUE IN GENERAL AND ON RIGHT REASON

Virtue is an intellectual force of the soul which so rules over animal suggestions or bodily passions that it easily attains that which is absolutely and simply the best.

1. But since there are some whose souls have outgrown all sense of God and of divine things and who recognize no sure guiding principle over the faculties, but maintain that we must obey that passion which by mere chance asserts sovereignty among the others, and fulfil its desires, who furthermore contend that in this consists the sum of human felicity; against these men, surely (if only they be men, and not vile beasts) we must proceed by another way, and by setting forth the measure of Right Reason, which derives not from that most divine portion of the soul which we call *boniform* but from the intellectual part properly so-called. *For there may be intellectual conception of those terms of which there is no reason.*[1]

2. I will take from this storehouse, therefore, certain principles which are immediately true and needing no proof, but into which almost all moral doctrine is plainly and easily resolved, even as mathematical demonstrations are resolved into their common axioms. Since these are the fruit of that faculty which is properly alled Νοῦς, I thought it not inappropriate to call them *Noemata.* Such is the nature of the matters that follow, and lest any one should fear they may do him ill, I do pledge my word that they savour not of severity or austerity but are altogether like honey, and entirely sweet and delicious, inasmuch as they propose no good save that which is pleasant and agreeable to the recipient.

. . . . . .

CHAPTER IV. CERTAIN NOEMATA OR INTELLECTUAL PRINCIPLES, INTO WHICH WELLNIGH ALL MORAL DOCTRINE IS RESOLVED

Noema I

A good is that which is pleasant, agreeable, and well-suited to

[1] Aristotle, *Moral. Eudem.*, lib. v. cap. 8.

any perceptive life or grade of such life and which involves the preservation of the recipient.

Noema II

On the other hand, what is unpleasant, disagreeable, and ill-suited to any perceptive life or grade of such life, is an evil, and if ultimately involving the destruction of the recipient, an extreme evil.

For example, if something not only injured the eyes or the ears but also superinduced deafness or blindness, that would be an extreme evil. It would be almost as great an evil even though the sight as a result were merely enfeebled or the hearing dulled. The same principle applies to the other faculties.

Noema III

Of the species or grades of perceptive lives which are found in the universe, some are superior to others and more excellent.

Noema IV

One good may be superior to another in nature, in duration, or in both.

This is clear of itself. Still it may be illustrated from this unpleasant consequence, that otherwise no life would be better than another and no felicity greater than another. Hence equal felicity would be the lot of God, angel, man, horse, and any vile little worm. This nobody, unless he be clearly insane, can ever admit. On the matter of duration, not even the slightest doubt or difficulty can arise.

Noema V

What is good, should be sought, but evil, eschewed. Moreover, the superior good should be sought rather than that which is inferior, and the lesser evil be endured, that we incur not a greater.

Noema VI

In that in which we are not yet experienced ourselves, we should believe those who profess themselves experienced, if only

they lead a life conformed to their profession, with no savour of deceit or snare of worldly profit.

Noema VII

The absence of a good which is as light is more desirable than the presence of an evil, which likewise is as light, in respect to weight and duration; and it is, further, so much the more desirable as evil exceeds good in weight and duration.

Noema VIII

That which is surely coming to pass should be reckoned as present, seeing that at some time it will come as really present and affect us in the present. And this reasoning is almost as true of that which will most probably happen.

Noema IX

Inferior goods are measured in relation to superior by weight and duration.

Noema X

A present good should be discontinued or diminished in case of a probable expectation of a future good infinitely superior to a present good in weight and duration; and much more so in case of a certain expectation.

Noema XI

A present evil should be endured that we may avoid an evil probably to occur infinitely greater than the present in weight and duration. The same may be still more positively asserted, when the evil is certain to occur.

Noema XII

The mind judges more rightly when free from the prejudice of the affections than when it is entangled in or perturbed by the passions or any bodily suggestions.

For even as a cloudy sky or troubled water does not admit the light, so the mind when perturbed and clouded by the passions

scarcely admits even the clearest reason. With this similitude Boethius illustrates the matter admirably in the poem beginning

Buried in black clouds, the stars may shed no light.

But it is too long to be transcribed here.

3. These, then, in general, are the *Noemata* which tend to imbue the soul with *prudence*, *temperance*, and *fortitude*, which concern our duty *to ourselves*. Those that follow concern our duty *to others*, that is, men and God, and concern Virtue. They therefore are the foundation of sincerity, justice, gratitude, mercy and piety. For I number piety with the moral virtues, since God is knowable by the light of nature.

Noema XIII

We should pursue the highest and most absolute good with the highest ardor, medium goods with medium ardor, the least goods with least ardor: nor should we subordinate the highest goods and the goods cognate with the highest, to the medium and the least, but the medium and the least to the highest.

Noema XIV

The good that you wish bestowed upon you in given circumstances you ought yourself to bestow upon another in the same circumstances, so far as may be done without injury to some third person.

Noema XV

The evil that you do not wish done to you, you ought to refrain from doing to another, so far as may be done without injury to some third person.

Noema XVI

Good should be repaid with good, not evil.

Noema XVII

It is good for a man to have that wherewith he may live well and happily.

NOEMA XVIII

If it is good that one man should be supplied with that wherewith he may live well and happily, it follows by sure analogy and even mathematically that it is twice as good so to supply two men, thrice to supply three, a thousandfold to supply a thousand, and so on.

NOEMA XIX

It is better for one man not to live pleasurably than for another to live ruinously and wretchedly.

NOEMA XX

It is good to obey a magistrate in matters ethically indifferent, even when there is no fear of punishment.

NOEMA XXI

It is better to obey God than man and our own desires.

NOEMA XXII

It is good and just that to each should be given his own, and the use and possession thereof should be granted him without annoyance.

NOEMA XXIII

However, it is manifest that one may so conduct himself that that which by acquisition or gift is his own may rightly cease to be his own.

4. These and similar declarations you may rightly call *Moral Noemata*, since they are in themselves so clear and manifest, if any one will consider them apart from all prejudice, that they need no complex reasons or lengthy argumentative deductions, but are recognized at first sight as true of themselves. We have now therefore in readiness an answer for the question as to what *Right Reason* is. For it is that which by certain and necessary consequences may be ultimately resolved into some Intellectual Principle that is immediately true. If, further, one ask an example of this sort of Principles in Ethics, those are at hand which we have just reviewed.

RICHARD CUMBERLAND

(1631-1718)

A TREATISE OF THE LAWS OF NATURE

Translated from the Latin * *by*

JOHN MAXWELL

CHAPTER I. OF THE NATURE OF THINGS

ALTHOUGH the Sceptics and Epicureans of old denied, and others of similar principles still persist in denying that there are any laws of nature, nevertheless, on all sides it is agreed what is intended by those terms. All understand thereby certain propositions of unchangeable truth which direct our voluntary actions in the choice of good and in the refusal of evil; and which impose upon us an obligation to regulate our external actions, even without civil laws, and apart from all considerations of those compacts which constitute civil government. That some such truths are, from the nature of things in general and of human nature in particular, necessarily suggested to the minds of men, and are by them understood and remembered whilst their faculties continue unimpaired, and that therefore these truths have there a real existence — this is what we affirm, and our adversaries expressly deny.

In order that the nature of these propositions may more plainly appear, it is necessary that we first examine the nature of things in general, then that of mankind, and lastly that of the good, in so far as relates to our question. We must afterwards show what kind of propositions direct the actions of men, and carry along with them naturally the force and obligation of laws, inasmuch as they point out what is necessary to be done to attain the end which nature has determined men to pursue. Lastly, that there are such laws will sufficiently appear from

* From *De Legibus Naturae Disquisitio Philosophica.* London, 1672. Reprinted, with verbal changes, from R. Cumberland's *A Treatise of the Laws of Nature,* translated by John Maxwell, London, 1727.

the certainty and necessary influence of those causes which produce them.

§ II. It ought not to seem strange to any, that it is here said, that the nature of things in the universe ought first to be considered, because the various faculties of man, which have need of many things for their preservation and improvement, and which are excited by all of them to action, cannot be otherwise understood. For how can any one understand what is most agreeable or most hurtful to the human mind or body, unless he consider so far as it is possible, all those causes, remote as well as near, which first formed and now preserve man, and may hereafter either support or destroy him? Nor is it possible to determine what is the best thing a man can do in each instance, unless the effects, remote as well as near, which may result in every variety of circumstances, be foreseen and compared among themselves. But the consideration of the causes on which men are dependent, and of those effects which may be produced by the concurrence of their own powers with such causes must necessarily lead every man to consider not only other men, wheresoever dispersed, and himself as a small part of mankind, but also to contemplate this entire frame of nature, and to recognize God, as its first founder and supreme governor. These things being considered in the best manner possible, certain general propositions of the reason may be learned by which can be determined what sort of human actions chiefly promote the common good of all beings, especially of such as are rational, and wherein each man's proper happiness is contained. And we shall hereafter see that in such conclusions, provided they be true and necessary, the law of nature is contained.

§ III. Nevertheless the nature of our undertaking does not require that we should take a detailed view of all kinds of beings. . . . It is sufficient for us in the beginning of this undertaking to have admonished the reader that the whole of moral philosophy and also the entire science of the laws of nature are ultimately resolved into natural observations known by the experience of all men, or into conclusions recognized as true natural philosophy. But natural philosophy in the large sense

in which it is here used does not only comprehend all those phenomena of natural bodies which we know from experiment, but also inquires into the nature of our souls, by means of observations made upon the mind's operations and characteristic perfections, and at length leads men by the chain of natural causes to the knowledge of the first mover, acknowledging him to be the cause of all necessary effects. For the nature, as well of the creatures as of the creator, suggests all those ideas from which the laws of nature are formed, and reveals the truth of those laws as practical propositions; but their full authority is derived from the knowledge of the creator. All this requires however to be explained a little more at length in this place.

§ IV. Although there are innumerable ideas that a contemplation of the universe may furnish us, to form the content of the particular propositions, which are to regulate our customs, I have, nevertheless, thought proper to select only a few, and those the most general, to explain in some measure that general description of the laws of nature which I proposed at the beginning of this chapter and which are contained a little more manifestly in one proposition, that is the fountain of all natural laws. This fundamental proposition is: *The greatest benevolence of every rational agent towards all, constitutes the happiest state of all in general and of each in particular, as far as is in their power to procure it; and is necessarily requisite in order to attain the happiest state, to which they can aspire; and therefore the common good of all is the supreme law.*

The sense of this proposition is first rightly to be explained; secondly, it is to be shown how it may be learned from the nature of things; and lastly, I hope it will plainly appear from what follows in this treatise, that it has the force of a law, and that all the laws of nature flow from it.

The reader must observe that I nowhere understand by the term *benevolence* that languid and lifeless volition of theirs which effects nothing of what one is said to desire, but that force only whereby we execute as speedily and thoroughly as we are able what we heartily desire. We must likewise also comprehend in this word that affection by reason of which we desire things

agreeable to our superiors, which is more particularly designated as *piety* towards God, *love* towards our country, and *respect* towards our parents. I chose moreover to make use of the word *benevolence*, rather, than that of *love*, because, by virtue of its component parts, it implies an act of our will joined with its most general object, the good, and is never taken in a bad sense as the word love sometimes is. I have said *the greatest benevolence*, because I would express the entire or adequate cause of the greatest happiness. By the word *all* I understand the entire body of rational beings, considered together, having regard to one end, which I there mention by the name of the happiest state. By the term *rational* being I beg leave to understand God as well as man; and I do so upon the authority of Cicero, whom I think I may safely take for a guide as to the proper use of a Latin word. For in his book on *The Laws* he uses *reason* as common both to God and men, and he says that *wisdom*, which all ascribe to God, is nothing other than "reason in perfection." I have used the words *constitutes the happiest state of all*, to intimate that benevolence is both the intrinsic cause of present, and the efficient cause of future happiness, and is a necessary requisite in both. I have added *as far as is in their power*, to imply that the assistance of things external is often not in our power, although they are requisite to the happiness of the animal life; and that no other assistance to a happy life is to be expected from the laws of nature and moral philosophy than precepts about our actions, and concerning those objects of our actions which are in our own power. Consequently although it happens that different men, according to their different abilities of mind and body, nay, that the same men, in different circumstances, are not equally able to promote the public good, nevertheless, the law of nature is sufficiently observed, and its end obtained, if every one does what he is able according to his present circumstances.

§ V. I must now show, both how the ideas contained in the foregoing proposition necessarily enter into the minds of men, and how they are necessarily connected when they are there; in other words, how they make a true proposition, which we

shall afterwards prove to be practical, and to have the force of a law. It is well known by the experience of all men that those ideas or thoughts which the logicians call simple apprehensions are excited in two ways in the mind of man: First, they are caused by the immediate presence of the object and the impression it makes upon the mind. In this way the mind becomes conscious of its own operations, and also of the motions of the imagination, or of the objects it presents to us, and thus by analogy also one judges of what passes in the minds of other rational beings, both God and men. Secondly, they are occasioned by means of our external senses, nerves, and membranes, and in this way we perceive other men, and the rest of this visible world. Thus it is apparent that the terms of our proposition become known, partly by internal, partly by external sensation. But what benevolence is, and what are its degrees, and consequently what is the greatest benevolence of each, we do not understand otherwise than by the mind reflecting upon itself. There is moreover need of no other aid, for such is the constitution of the mind that it cannot but be thoroughly sensible of its own actions and affections, as these things are the most intimately united with itself. It must be acknowledged, however, that it is to the assistance of our outward senses that we owe the knowledge of the external advantages which benevolence distributes amongst all. In the same manner it is by our inward sense that we learn the nature of reason, and in consequence thereby apprehend what is meant by rational agents as mentioned in the subject of the proposition. That there are others besides ourselves who have the use of reason, we gather by observations made by our external senses. The knowledge of the causes constituting anything, whether intrinsically, or in the way of an efficient, we derive generally by the assistance of our outward senses, and by reasoning founded on appearances. The inner nature of our soul, and the active powers by which it determines the voluntary motions of our bodies in pursuit of apparent good, the mind itself perceives partly by reflection upon itself, and partly by the aid of the senses, whereby is revealed the effects consequent upon the command of our will. Lastly, we come to the knowledge of

the state of men, and of their happiness, in the same way that, as we have hinted, we learn their nature, and that of those good things in the enjoyment whereof their happiness consists. For the state of things adds nothing to their nature, beyond the notion of some continuance. And a happy state is so called, from the possession of good things, both very many and very great.

§ VI. The connexion of the terms of this proposition, in which its necessary truth consists, seems to me very evident. It can be reduced to the following statement. Benevolence or the act of the will by which we prosecute all good things that are within our power, being that which is most effectual to procure the enjoyment of them by ourselves and other rational beings, is consequently the most that men can effect, in order that they themselves and others may most happily enjoy them. Or, to express the same thing in other terms, there is no power in men greater, by which they may procure to themselves and others a collection of all good things, than a will to pursue every one his own happiness, together with the happiness of others.

From these statements, what is first obvious, is that there is no power in men greater to effect anything than a will determined to exert its utmost force.

In the next place, it is also most evident that the happiness of each particular person, for example of Socrates and Plato, and of all other individuals, mentioned in the predicate, cannot be separated or regarded as distinct from that happiness of all whereof the cause is contained in the subject of the same proposition. This is true because the whole does not differ from all the parts taken together. This proposition, moreover, concerning the universal benevolence, is to be regarded as in agreement with the nature of laws. It declares, not what any one person or a few ought to do to procure their own happiness without regard to that of others, but both what all unitedly can do in order to be happy, and what each separately, without any discord amongst themselves, may do in order to obtain that common happiness of all in which the greatest happiness possible to each individual is contained, and whereby it is most effectually pro-

moted. It is first and better known as flowing from the common and essential attributes of human nature, what all in general can or cannot do, conducing to the common good, than what any particular person can do in certain circumstances, since the latter are infinite and consequently impossible to be wholly known by any man. As, several armies being brought into the field, it is better known that they cannot all get the victory, than it is which army shall overcome.

Thirdly, and in the last place, one or a few individuals can neither enjoy a present happiness, or with probability hope for it hereafter, by acting without any regard, or in opposition, to the happiness of all other rational beings; since to a mind thus affected an essential part of its happiness is wanting, that is, that inner peace, which arises from an uniform wisdom always in accord with itself. This is obvious since it is inconsistent for one to determine to act after one manner in relation to oneself, and after another manner in relation to others that partake of the same nature. That great joy is also lacking, which arises in a benevolent disposition from a sense of the felicity of others; not to speak of envy, pride, and all the other vices, which besiege in legion the malevolent and, as being the worst distempers of the mind, render them necessarily miserable. Besides, no person can have a well-grounded hope of happiness if he neglects, nay provokes to his ruin other reasonable beings, as God and men, who are the external causes of his happiness, and upon whose aid the hope of it thus necessarily depends. There is, therefore, no other way, by which the individual can attain to his own happiness, than that which leads to the common happiness of all.

§ VII. I acknowledge, however, that this proposition cannot be made efficacious in the formation of any man's habits, before he has proposed to himself as his end the effect here discussed, that is, his own happiness in conjunction with that of others; and has taken as the means those various actions that are embraced in the exercise of benevolence. Nevertheless, the general proposition, and all those which may be justly inferred from it, such as those particular propositions which declare the powers of fidelity, gratitude, natural affection, and the other virtues, in

obtaining any part of human happiness, may be proved to be necessarily true before such an end is proposed. For the whole truth, as well of that general proposition, as of those propositions which are deduced from it, depends solely upon the natural and necessary efficacy of these virtuous actions as causes to produce such effects. It is not necessary to presuppose that there are such actions, indeed, which depend upon the agency of free causes. It suffices in order to prove these propositions as true, that, whenever there are such causes, then effects of such a kind inevitably follow from them. This is in entire agreement with the solution of all kinds of mathematical problems, since in regard to them no one questions but that we can attain true demonstrations. Every one knows that the drawing of lines and the comparison of them in geometrical calculation, depends upon the free will of men. We add, subtract, etc., as a matter of freedom, but yet whoever performs these operations according to the rules prescribed, must of necessity find out the true sum, which is equal to all the parts added. The same thing may be said of the remainder in subtraction, the product in multiplication, the quotient in division, and the root in extractions. And, in general, in every question the solution of which is possible from what is given, the answer is necessarily found from the operations when duly performed. The connexion is necessary between the effect desired and the causes assigned, as this science reveals to us. According to this pattern other practical arts are to be modelled, and this it is we have endeavored to attain in the explication of the principles of morality, by reducing to one general term *benevolence* all those voluntary actions which fall under the direction of moral philosophy, by inquiring as to its different branches, and, lastly, by showing the connexion between the act and the end designed.

§ VIII. But seeing that only voluntary actions can be governed by human reason, and that those only which have regard to intelligent beings are considered in morality, and seeing that the object of the will is good (for evil is regarded as the privation of some good), it is evident, that a more general notion of such

actions cannot be formed than what comes under the name of *benevolence*, inasmuch as this comprehends the desire of all kinds of good things, and consequently the avoidance of all kinds of evils. But moreover, the force of this benevolence extends itself to all those free acts of the understanding by which we consider or compare among themselves, the divers good things or inquire concerning the means of obtaining them, and also likewise to those acts of our bodily faculties, which are directed by our will in the pursuit of good. Now it is universally true, that the motion of a point does not more certainly produce a line, or the addition of numbers a sum, than that benevolence produces a good effect to the person to whom we wish well, proportioned to the power and degree of affection of the agent in the given circumstances. It is also certain that keeping faith, gratitude, natural affection, etc. are component parts of a benevolence the most effective, towards all, or of the modes of its exercise in particular circumstances, and that they must inevitably produce their good effect. This is true in precisely the same manner, as it is certain, that addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division, are parts and modes of calculation; and that a right line, circle, parabola, and other curves, express the diverse effects, which geometry produces by the motion of a point. . . .

§ IX. Furthermore, the nature of things instructs us that we must first distinctly know what is the best effect within our power, before we can clearly apprehend the chief end we ought to propose. For the answer to the former question consists of more simple terms, and is consequently of more certain signification. The answer to the latter question ought to contain all that is in the former, and moreover signifies, that the rational agent has personally determined to use the means proper to produce that effect. But owing to the consideration that many effects tending to the common good are within our power, and that by the will of the first cause, they have been made necessary to the attainment of our own happiness, there arises both an obligation to propose the production of such effects, and also the actual intention itself, whenever found in men. We must of

necessity therefore lay the foundation of the laws of nature in those manifest observations of the powers of men by which, duly regulated, they are enabled to make each other happy, nay will certainly do so. But these laws are all summed up in *benevolence* or *universal love.*

BARUCH DE SPINOZA

(1632–1677)

THE ETHICS

Translated from the Latin by*

R. H. M. ELWES

PART I. CONCERNING GOD

Definitions

I. By that which is *self-caused*, I mean that of which the essence involves existence, or that of which the nature is only conceivable as existent.

II. A thing is called *finite after its kind*, when it can be limited by another thing of the same nature; for instance, a body is called finite because we always conceive another greater body. So, also, a thought is limited by another thought, but a body is not limited by thought, nor a thought by body.

III. By *substance*, I mean that which is in itself, and is conceived through itself; in other words, that of which a conception can be formed independently of any other conception.

IV. By *attribute*, I mean that which the intellect perceives as constituting the essence of substance.

V. By *mode*, I mean the modifications of substance, or that which exists in, and is conceived through, something other than itself.

VI. By *God*, I mean a being absolutely infinite — that is, a substance consisting in infinite attributes, of which each expresses eternal and infinite essentiality.

Explanation. — I say absolutely infinite, not infinite after its kind: for, of a thing infinite only after its kind, infinite attributes

* *Opera posthuma*, Amsterdam, 1677; *Opera*, ed. C. H. Bruder, Leipzig, 1843–46 (*Ethica ordine geometrica demonstrata*, vol. i. pp. 143–416). Reprinted here from *Spinoza's Works*, translated by R. H. M. Elwes. London, George Bell and Sons, 1884; rev. ed., 1906.

may be denied; but that which is absolutely infinite, contains in its essence whatever expresses reality, and involves no negation.

VII. That thing is called free, which exists solely by the necessity of its own nature, and of which the action is determined by itself alone. On the other hand, that thing is necessary, or rather constrained, which is determined by something external to itself to a fixed and definite method of existence or action.

VIII. By *eternity*, I mean existence itself, in so far as it is conceived necessarily to follow solely from the definition of that which is eternal.

Explanation. — Existence of this kind is conceived as an eternal truth, like the essence of a thing, and, therefore, cannot be explained by means of continuance or time, though continuance may be conceived without a beginning or end.

Axioms

I. Everything which exists, exists either in itself or in something else.

II. That which cannot be conceived through anything else must be conceived through itself.

III. From a given definite cause an effect necessarily follows; and, on the other hand, if no definite cause be granted, it is impossible that an effect can follow.

IV. The knowledge of an effect depends on and involves the knowledge of a cause.

V. Things which have nothing in common cannot be understood, the one by means of the other; the conception of one does not involve the conception of the other.

VI. A true idea must correspond with its ideate or object.

VII. If a thing can be conceived as non-existing, its essence does not involve existence.

Propositions

Prop. I. *Substance is by nature prior to its modifications.*

Proof. — This is clear from Defs. iii. and v.

Prop. II. *Two substances, whose attributes are different, have nothing in common.*

Proof. — Also evident from Def. iii. For each must exist in itself, and be conceived through itself; in other words, the conception of one does not imply the conception of the other.

PROP. III. *Things which have nothing in common cannot be one the cause of the other.*

Proof. — If they have nothing in common, it follows that one cannot be apprehended by means of the other (Ax. v.), and, therefore, one cannot be the cause of the other (Ax. iv.). *Q. E. D.*

PROP. IV. *Two or more distinct things are distinguished one from the other, either by the difference of the attributes of the substances, or by the difference of their modifications.*

Proof. — Everything which exists, exists either in itself or in something else (Ax. i.), — that is (by Defs. iii. and v.), nothing is granted in addition to the understanding, except substance and its modifications. Nothing is, therefore, given besides the understanding, by which several things may be distinguished one from the other, except the substances, or, in other words (see Ax. iv.), their attributes and modifications. *Q. E. D.*

PROP. V. *There cannot exist in the universe two or more substances having the same nature or attribute.*

Proof. — If several distinct substances be granted, they must be distinguished one from the other, either by the difference of their attributes, or by the difference of their modifications (Prop. iv.). If only by the difference of their attributes, it will be granted that there cannot be more than one with an identical attribute. If by the difference of their modifications, — as substance is naturally prior to its modifications (Prop. i.), — it follows that setting the modifications aside, and considering substance in itself, that is truly (Defs. iii. and vi.), there cannot be conceived one substance different from another, — that is (by Prop. iv.), there cannot be granted several substances, but one substance only. *Q. E. D.*

PROP. VI. *One substance cannot be produced by another substance.*

Proof. — It is impossible that there should be in the universe two substances with an identical attribute, *i. e.* which have anything common to them both (Prop. ii.), and, therefore (Prop.

iii.), one cannot be the cause of another, neither can one be produced by the other. *Q. E. D.*

Corollary. — Hence it follows that a substance cannot be produced by anything external to itself. For in the universe nothing is granted, save substances and their modifications (as appears from Ax. i. and Defs. iii. and v.). Now (by the last Prop.) substance cannot be produced by another substance, therefore it cannot be produced by anything external to itself. *Q. E. D.* This is shown still more readily by the absurdity of the contradictory. For, if substance be produced by an external cause, the knowledge of it would depend on the knowledge of its cause (Ax. iv.), and (by Def. iii.) it would itself not be substance.

Prop. VII. *Existence belongs to the nature of substance.*

Proof. — Substance cannot be produced by anything external (Corollary, Prop. vi.), it must, therefore, be its own cause — that is, its essence necessarily involves existence, or existence belongs to its nature.

Prop. VIII. *Every substance is necessarily infinite.*

Proof. — There can only be one substance with an identical attribute, and existence follows from its nature (Prop. vii.); its nature, therefore, involves existence, either as finite or infinite. It does not exist as finite, for (by Def. ii.) it would then be limited by something else of the same kind, which would also necessarily exist (Prop. vii.); and there would be two substances with an identical attribute, which is absurd (Prop. v.). It therefore exists as infinite. *Q. E. D.*

Note I. — As finite existence involves a partial negation, and infinite existence is the absolute affirmation of the given nature, it follows (solely from Prop. vii.) that every substance is necessarily infinite.

. . . . . .

Prop. XVI. *From the necessity of the divine nature must follow an infinite number of things in infinite ways — that is, all things which can fall within the sphere of infinite intellect.*

Proof. — This proposition will be clear to everyone who remembers that from the given definition of any thing the intellect infers several properties, which really necessarily follow

therefrom (that is, from the actual essence of the thing defined); and it infers more properties in proportion as the definition of the thing expresses more reality, that is, in proportion as the essence of the thing defined involves more reality. Now, as the divine nature has absolutely infinite attributes (by Def. vi.), of which each expresses infinite essence after its kind, it follows that from the necessity of its nature an infinite number of things (that is, everything which can fall within the sphere of an infinite intellect) must necessarily follow. *Q. E. D.*

Corollary I. — Hence it follows, that God is the efficient cause of all that can fall within the sphere of an infinite intellect.

Corollary II. — It also follows that God is a cause in himself, and not through an accident of his nature.

Corollary III. — It follows, thirdly, that God is the absolutely first cause.

PROP. XVII. *God acts solely by the laws of his own nature, and is not constrained by anyone.*

Proof. — We have just shown (in Prop. xvi.), that solely from the necessity of the divine nature, or, what is the same thing, solely from the laws of his nature, an infinite number of things absolutely follow in an infinite number of ways; and we proved (in Prop. xv.) that without God nothing can be nor be conceived; but that all things are in God. Wherefore nothing can exist outside himself, whereby he can be conditioned or constrained to act. Wherefore God acts solely by the laws of his own nature, and is not constrained by anyone. *Q. E. D.*

Corollary I. — It follows: 1. That there can be no cause which, either extrinsically or intrinsically, besides the perfection of his own nature, moves God to act.

Corollary II. — It follows: 2. That God is the sole free cause. For God alone exists by the sole necessity of his nature (by Prop. xi. and Prop. xiv. Coroll. i.), and acts by the sole necessity of his nature, wherefore God is (by Def. vii.) the sole free cause. *Q. E. D.*

Note. — Others think that God is a free cause, because he can, as they think, bring it about, that those things which we have said follow from his nature — that is, which are in his power,

should not come to pass, or should not be produced by him. But this is the same as if they said, that God could bring it about that it should not follow from the nature of a triangle, that its three interior angles should be equal to two right angles; or that from a given cause no effect should follow, which is absurd.

. . . . . .

PROP. XVIII. *God is the indwelling and not the transient cause of all things.*

Proof. — All things which are, are in God, and must be conceived through God (by Prop. xv.), therefore (by Prop. xvi. Coroll. i.) God is the cause of those things which are in him. This is our first point. Further, besides God there can be no substance (by Prop. xiv.), that is nothing in itself external to God. This is our second point. God, therefore, is the indwelling and not the transient cause of all things. *Q. E. D.*

PROP. XXIX. *Nothing in the universe is contingent, but all things are conditioned to exist and operate in a particular manner by the necessity of the divine nature.*

Proof. — Whatsoever is, is in God (Prop. xv.). But God cannot be called a thing contingent. For (by Prop. xi.) he exists necessarily, and not contingently. Further, the modes of the divine nature follow therefrom necessarily, and not contingently (Prop. xvi.); and they thus follow, whether we consider the divine nature absolutely, or whether we consider it as in any way conditioned to act (Prop. xxvii.). Further, God is not only the cause of these modes, in so far as they simply exist (by Prop. xxiv., Coroll.), but also in so far as they are considered as conditioned for operating in a particular manner (Prop. xxvi.). If they be not conditioned by God (Prop. xxvi.), it is impossible, and not contingent, that they should condition themselves; contrariwise, if they be conditioned by God, it is impossible, and not contingent, that they should render themselves unconditioned. Wherefore all things are conditioned by the necessity of the divine nature, not only to exist, but also to exist and operate in a particular manner, and there is nothing that is contingent. *Q. E. D.*

Note. — Before going any further, I wish here to explain,

what we should understand by nature viewed as active (*natura naturans*), and nature viewed as passive (*natura naturata*). I say to explain, or rather call attention to it, for I think that, from what has been said, it is sufficiently clear, that by nature viewed as active we should understand that which is in itself, and is conceived through itself, or those attributes of substance, which express eternal and infinite essence, in other words (Prop. xiv. Coroll. i., and Prop. xvii. Coroll. ii.) God, in so far as he is considered as a free cause.

By nature viewed as passive I understand all that which follows from the necessity of the nature of God, or of any of the attributes of God, that is, all the modes of the attributes of God, in so far as they are considered as things which are in God, and which without God cannot exist or be conceived.

PROP. XXXII. *Will cannot be called a free cause, but only a necessary cause.*

Proof. — Will is only a particular mode of thinking, like intellect; therefore (by Prop. xxviii.) no volition can exist, nor be conditioned to act, unless it be conditioned by some cause other than itself, which cause is conditioned by a third cause, and so on to infinity. But if will be supposed infinite, it must also be conditioned to exist and act by God, not by virtue of his being substance absolutely infinite, but by virtue of his possessing an attribute which expresses the infinite and eternal essence of thought (by Prop. xxiii.). Thus, however it be conceived, whether as finite or infinite, it requires a cause by which it should be conditioned to exist and act. Thus (Def. vii.) it cannot be called a free cause, but only a necessary or constrained cause. *Q. E. D.*

Corollary I. — Hence it follows, first, that God does not act according to freedom of the will.

Corollary II. — It follows, secondly, that will and intellect stand in the same relation to the nature of God as do motion, and rest, and absolutely all natural phenomena, which must be conditioned by God (Prop. xxix.) to exist and act in a particular manner. For will, like the rest, stands in need of a cause, by which it is conditioned to exist and act in a particular manner.

And although, when will or intellect be granted, an infinite number of results may follow, yet God cannot on that account be said to act from freedom of the will, any more than the infinite number of results from motion and rest would justify us in saying that motion and rest act by free will. Wherefore will no more appertains to God than does anything else in nature, but stands in the same relation to him as motion, rest, and the like, which we have shown to follow from the necessity of the divine nature, and to be conditioned by it to exist and act in a particular manner.

PROP. XXXIII. *Things could not have been brought into being by God in any manner or in any order different from that which has in fact obtained.*

Proof. — All things necessarily follow from the nature of God (Prop. xvi.), and by the nature of God are conditioned to exist and act in a particular way (Prop. xxix.). If things, therefore, could have been of a different nature, or have been conditioned to act in a different way, so that the order of nature would have been different, God's nature would also have been able to be different from what it now is; and therefore (by Prop. xi.) that different nature also would have perforce existed, and consequently there would have been able to be two or more Gods. This (by Prop. xiv. Coroll. i.) is absurd. Therefore things could not have been brought into being by God in any other manner, &c. *Q. E. D.*

Note I. — As I have thus shown, more clearly than the sun at noonday, that there is nothing to justify us in calling things contingent, I wish to explain briefly what meaning we shall attach to the word contingent; but I will first explain the words necessary and impossible.

A thing is called necessary either in respect to its essence or in respect to its cause; for the existence of a thing necessarily follows, either from its essence and definition, or from a given efficient cause. For similar reasons a thing is said to be impossible; namely, inasmuch as its essence or definition involves a contradiction, or because no external cause is granted, which is conditioned to produce such an effect; but a thing can in no respect be called contingent, save in relation to the imperfection of our knowledge.

A thing of which we do not know whether the essence does or does not involve a contradiction, or of which, knowing that it does not involve a contradiction, we are still in doubt concerning the existence, because the order of causes escapes us — such a thing, I say, cannot appear to us either necessary or impossible. Wherefore we call it contingent or possible.

. . . . . .

PROP. XXXIV. *God's power is identical with his essence.*

Proof. — From the sole necessity of the essence of God it follows that God is the cause of himself (Prop. xi.) and of all things (Prop. xvi. and Coroll.). Wherefore the power of God, by which he and all things are and act, is identical with his essence. *Q. E. D.*

PROP. XXXV. *Whatsoever we conceive to be in the power of God, necessarily exists.*

Proof. — Whatsoever is in God's power, must (by the last Prop.) be comprehended in his essence in such a manner, that it necessarily follows therefrom, and therefore necessarily exists. *Q. E. D.*

PROP. XXXVI. *There is no cause from whose nature some effect does not follow.*

Proof. — Whatsoever exists expresses God's nature or essence in a given conditioned manner (by Prop. xxv. Coroll.); that is (by Prop. xxxiv.), whatsoever exists, expresses in a given conditioned manner God's power, which is the cause of all things, therefore an effect must (by Prop. xvi.) necessarily follow. *Q. E. D.*

APPENDIX. — In the foregoing I have explained the nature and properties of God. I have shown that he necessarily exists, that he is one: that he is, and acts solely by the necessity of his own nature; that he is the free cause of all things, and how he is so; that all things are in God, and so depend on him, that without him they could neither exist nor be conceived; lastly, that all things are predetermined by God, not through his free will or absolute fiat, but from the very nature of God or infinite power. I have further, where occasion offered, taken care to remove

the prejudices, which might impede the comprehension of my demonstrations. Yet there still remain misconceptions not a few, which might and may prove very grave hindrances to the understanding of the concatenation of things, as I have explained it above. I have therefore thought it worth while to bring these misconceptions before the bar of reason.

All such opinions spring from the notion commonly entertained, that all things in nature act as men themselves act, namely, with an end in view. It is accepted as certain, that God himself directs all things to a definite goal (for it is said that God made all things for man, and man that he might worship him). I will, therefore, consider this opinion, asking first why it obtains general credence, and why all men are naturally so prone to adopt it? secondly, I will point out its falsity; and, lastly, I will show how it has given rise to prejudices about good and bad, right and wrong, praise and blame, order and confusion, beauty and ugliness, and the like. However, this is not the place to deduce these misconceptions from the nature of the human mind: it will be sufficient here, if I assume as a starting point, what ought to be universally admitted, namely, that all men are born ignorant of the causes of things, that all have the desire to seek for what is useful to them, and that they are conscious of such desire. Herefrom it follows, first, that men think themselves free inasmuch as they are conscious of their volitions and desires, and never even dream, in their ignorance, of the causes which have disposed them so to wish and desire. Secondly, that men do all things for an end, namely, for that which is useful to them, and which they seek. Thus it comes to pass that they only look for a knowledge of the final causes of events, and when these are learned, they are content, as having no cause for further doubt. If they cannot learn such causes from external sources, they are compelled to turn to considering themselves, and reflecting what end would have induced them personally to bring about the given event, and thus they necessarily judge other natures by their own. Further, as they find in themselves and outside themselves many means which assist them not a little in their search for what is useful, for instance, eyes for seeing, teeth for chewing,

herbs and animals for yielding food, the sun for giving light, the sea for breeding fish, &c., they come to look on the whole of nature as a means for obtaining such conveniences. Now as they are aware, that they found these conveniences and did not make them, they think they have cause for believing, that some other being has made them for their use. As they look upon things as means, they cannot believe them to be self-created; but, judging from the means which they are accustomed to prepare for themselves, they are bound to believe in some ruler or rulers of the universe endowed with human freedom, who have arranged and adapted everything for human use. They are bound to estimate the nature of such rulers (having no information on the subject) in accordance with their own nature, and therefore they assert that the gods ordained everything for the use of man, in order to bind man to themselves and obtain from him the highest honour. Hence also it follows, that everyone thought out for himself, according to his abilities, a different way of worshipping God, so that God might love him more than his fellows, and direct the whole course of nature for the satisfaction of his blind cupidity and insatiable avarice. Thus the prejudice developed into superstition, and took deep root in the human mind; and for this reason everyone strove most zealously to understand and explain the final causes of things; but in their endeavour to show that nature does nothing in vain, *i. e.*, nothing which is useless to man, they only seem to have demonstrated that nature, the gods, and men are all mad together. Consider, I pray you, the result: among the many helps of nature they were bound to find some hindrances, such as storms, earthquakes, diseases, &c.: so they declared that such things happen, because the gods are angry at some wrong done them by men, or at some fault committed in their worship. Experience day by day protested and showed by infinite examples, that good and evil fortunes fall to the lot of pious and impious alike; still they would not abandon their inveterate prejudice, for it was more easy for them to class such contradictions among other unknown things of whose use they were ignorant, and thus to retain their actual and innate condition of ignorance, than to destroy the whole fabric of their

reasoning and start afresh. They therefore laid down as an axiom, that God's judgments far transcend human understanding. Such a doctrine might well have sufficed to conceal the truth from the human race for all eternity, if mathematics had not furnished another standard of verity in considering solely the essence and properties of figures without regard to their final causes. There are other reasons (which I need not mention here) besides mathematics, which might have caused men's minds to be directed to these general prejudices, and have led them to the knowledge of the truth.

I have now sufficiently explained my first point. There is no need to show at length, that nature has no particular goal in view, and that final causes are mere human figments. This, I think, is already evident enough, both from the causes and foundations on which I have shown such prejudice to be based, and also from Prop. xvi., and the Corollary of Prop. xxxii., and, in fact, all those propositions in which I have shown, that everything in nature proceeds from a sort of necessity, and with the utmost perfection. . . .

PART II. OF THE NATURE AND ORIGIN OF THE MIND

Preface

I now pass on to explaining the results, which must necessarily follow from the essence of God, or of the eternal and infinite being; not, indeed, all of them (for we proved in Part i., Prop. xvi., that an infinite number must follow in an infinite number of ways), but only those which are able to lead us, as it were by the hand, to the knowledge of the human mind and its highest blessedness.

Definitions

I. By *body* I mean a mode which expresses in a certain determinate manner the essence of God, in so far as he is considered as an extended thing. (See Pt. i. Prop. xxv. Coroll.)

II. I consider as belonging to the essence of a thing that, which being given, the thing is necessarily given also, and, which being removed, the thing is necessarily removed also; in other words, that without which the thing, and which itself without the thing, can neither be nor be conceived.

III. By *idea*, I mean the mental conception which is formed by the mind as a thinking thing.

Explanation. — I say *conception* rather than perception, because the word perception seems to imply that the mind is passive in respect to the object; whereas conception seems to express an activity of the mind.

IV. By *an adequate idea*, I mean an idea which, in so far as it is considered in itself, without relation to the object, has all the properties or intrinsic marks of a true idea.

Explanation. — I say *intrinsic*, in order to exclude that mark which is extrinsic, namely, the agreement between the idea and its object (*ideatum*).

V. *Duration* is the indefinite continuance of existing.

Explanation. — I say *indefinite*, because it cannot be determined through the existence itself of the existing thing, or by its efficient cause, which necessarily gives the existence of the thing, but does not take it away.

VI. *Reality* and *perfection* I use as synonymous terms.

VII. By *particular things*, I mean things which are finite and have a conditioned existence; but if several individual things concur in one action, so as to be all simultaneously the effect of one cause, I consider them all, so far, as one particular thing.

Axioms

I. The essence of man does not involve necessary existence, that is, it may, in the order of nature, come to pass that this or that man does or does not exist.

II. Man thinks.

III. Modes of thinking, such as love, desire, or any other of the passions, do not take place, unless there be in the same individual an idea of the thing loved, desired, &c. But the idea can exist without the presence of any other mode of thinking.

IV. We perceive that a certain body is affected in many ways.

V. We feel and perceive no particular things, save bodies and modes of thought.

Propositions

Prop. I. *Thought is an attribute of God, or God is a thinking thing.*

Proof. — Particular thoughts, or this or that thought, are modes which, in a certain conditioned manner, express the nature of God (Pt. i. Prop. xxv. Coroll.). God therefore possesses the attribute (Pt. i. Def. v.) of which the concept is involved in all particular thoughts, which latter are conceived thereby. Thought, therefore, is one of the infinite attributes of God, which express God's eternal and infinite essence (Pt. i. Def. vi.). In other words, God is a thinking thing. *Q. E. D.*

Note. — This proposition is also evident from the fact, that we are able to conceive an infinite thinking being. For, in proportion as a thinking being is conceived as thinking more thoughts, so is it conceived as containing more reality or perfection. Therefore a being, which can think an infinite number of things in an infinite number of ways, is, necessarily, in respect of thinking, infinite. As, therefore, from the consideration of thought alone we conceive an infinite being, thought is necessarily (Pt. i. Defs. iv. and vi.) one of the infinite attributes of God, as we were desirous of showing.

Prop. II. *Extension is an attribute of God, or God is an extended thing.*

Proof. — The proof of this proposition is similar to that of the last.

Prop. III. *In God there is necessarily the idea not only of his essence, but also of all things which necessarily follow from his essence.*

Proof. — God (by the first Prop. of this Part) can think an infinite number of things in infinite ways, or (what is the same thing, by Prop. xvi. Part i.) can form the idea of his essence, and of all things which necessarily follow therefrom. Now all that is in the power of God necessarily is (Pt. i. Prop. xxxv). There-

fore, such an idea as we are considering necessarily is, and in God alone. *Q. E. D.* (Part i. Prop. xv.)

Note. — The multitude understand by the power of God the free will of God, and the right over all things that exist, which latter are accordingly generally considered as contingent. For it is said that God has the power to destroy all things, and to reduce them to nothing. Further, the power of God is very often likened to the power of kings. But this doctrine we have refuted (Pt. i. Prop. xxxii., Corolls. i. and ii.), and we have shown (Part i. Prop. xvi.) that God acts by the same necessity, as that by which he understands himself; in other words, as it follows from the necessity of the divine nature (as all admit), that God understands himself, so also does it follow by the same necessity that God performs infinite acts in infinite ways. We further showed (Part i. Prop. xxxiv.), that God's power is identical with God's essence in action; therefore it is as impossible for us to conceive God as not acting, as to conceive him as non-existent. If we might pursue the subject further, I could point out, that the power which is commonly attributed to God is not only human (as showing that God is conceived by the multitude as a man, or in the likeness of a man), but involves a negation of power. However, I am unwilling to go over the same ground so often. I would only beg the reader again and again, to turn over frequently in his mind what I have said in Part i. from Prop. xvi. to the end. No one will be able to follow my meaning, unless he is scrupulously careful not to confound the power of God with the human power and right of kings.

Prop. XXXII. *All ideas, in so far as they are referred to God, are true.*

Proof. — All ideas which are in God agree in every respect with their objects (II. vii. Coroll.), therefore (I. Ax. vi.) they are all true. *Q. E. D.*

Prop. XXXIII. *There is nothing positive in ideas, which causes them to be called false.*

Proof. — If this be denied, conceive, if possible, a positive mode of thinking, which should constitute the distinctive quality of falsehood. Such a mode of thinking cannot be in God (II.

xxxii.); external to God it cannot be or be conceived (I. xv.). Therefore there is nothing positive in ideas which causes them to be called false. *Q. E. D.*

Prop. XXXIV. *Every idea, which in us is absolute or adequate and perfect, is true.*

Proof. — When we say that an idea in us is adequate and perfect, we say, in other words (II. xi. Coroll.), that the idea is adequate and perfect in God, in so far as he constitutes the essence of our mind; consequently (II. xxxii.), we say that such an idea is true. *Q. E. D.*

Prop. XXXV. *Falsity consists in the privation of knowledge, which inadequate, fragmentary, or confused ideas involve.*

Proof. — There is nothing positive in ideas, which causes them to be called false (II. xxxiii.); but falsity cannot consist in simple privation (for minds, not bodies, are said to err and to be mistaken), neither can it consist in absolute ignorance, for ignorance and error are not identical; wherefore it consists in the privation of knowledge, which inadequate, fragmentary, or confused ideas involve. *Q. E. D.*

. . . . . .

Prop. XXXVI. *Inadequate and confused ideas follow by the same necessity, as adequate or clear and distinct ideas.*

Proof. — All ideas are in God (I. xv.), and in so far as they are referred to God are true (II. xxxii.) and (II. vii. Coroll.) adequate; therefore there are no ideas confused or inadequate, except in respect to a particular mind (cf. II. xxiv. and xxviii.); therefore all ideas, whether adequate or inadequate, follow by the same necessity (II. vi.). *Q. E. D.*

Prop. XL. *Whatsoever ideas in the mind follow from ideas which are therein adequate, are also themselves adequate.*

Proof. — This proposition is self-evident. For when we say that an idea in the human mind follows from ideas which are therein adequate, we say, in other words (II. xi. Coroll.), that an idea is in the divine intellect, whereof God is the cause, not in so far as he is infinite, nor in so far as he is affected by the ideas of very many particular things, but only in so far as he constitutes the essence of the human mind.

Note II. — From all that has been said above it is clear, that we, in many cases, perceive and form our general notions: — (1) From particular things represented to our intellect fragmentarily, confusedly, and without order through our senses (II. xxix. Coroll.); I have settled to call such perceptions by the name of knowledge from the mere suggestions of experience. (2) From symbols, *e. g.*, from the fact of having read or heard certain words we remember things and form certain ideas concerning them, similar to those through which we imagine things (II. xviii. note). I shall call both these ways of regarding things *knowledge of the first kind*, *opinion*, or *imagination*. (3) From the fact that we have notions common to all men, and adequate ideas of the properties of things (II. xxxviii. Coroll., xxxix. and Coroll. and xl.); this I call *reason* and *knowledge of the second kind*. Besides these two kinds of knowledge, there is, as I will hereafter show, a third kind of knowledge, which we will call intuition. This kind of knowledge proceeds from an adequate idea of the absolute essence of certain attributes of God to the adequate knowledge of the essence of things. I will illustrate all three kinds of knowledge by a single example. Three numbers are given for finding a fourth, which shall be to the third as the second is to the first. Tradesmen without hesitation multiply the second by the third, and divide the product by the first; either because they have not forgotten the rule which they received from a master without any proof, or because they have often made trial of it with simple numbers, or by virtue of the proof of the nineteenth proposition of the seventh book of Euclid, namely, in virtue of the general property of proportionals.

But with very simple numbers there is no need of this. For instance, one, two, three, being given, everyone can see that the fourth proportional is six; and this is much clearer, because we infer the fourth number from an intuitive grasping of the ratio, which the first bears to the second.

Prop. XLI. *Knowledge of the first kind is the only source of falsity, knowledge of the second and third kinds is necessarily true.*

Proof. — To knowledge of the first kind we have (in the foregoing note) assigned all those ideas, which are inadequate and

confused; therefore this kind of knowledge is the only source of falsity (II. xxxv.). Furthermore, we assigned to the second and third kinds of knowledge those ideas which are adequate; therefore these kinds are necessarily true (II. xxxiv.). *Q. E. D.*

Prop. XLII. *Knowledge of the second and third kinds, not knowledge of the first kind, teaches us to distinguish the true from the false.*

Proof. — This proposition is self-evident. He, who knows how to distinguish between true and false, must have an adequate idea of true and false. That is (II. xl., note ii.), he must know the true and the false by the second or third kind of knowledge.

Prop. XLIV. *It is not in the nature of reason to regard things as contingent, but as necessary.*

Proof. — It is in the nature of reason to perceive things truly (II. xli.), namely (I. Ax. vi.), as they are in themselves — that is (I. xxix.), not as contingent, but as necessary. *Q. E. D.*

Corollary I. — Hence it follows, that it is only through our imagination that we consider things, whether in respect to the future or the past, as contingent.

. . . . . .

Corollary II. — It is in the nature of reason to perceive things under a certain form of eternity (*sub quadam aeternitatis specie*).

Proof. — It is in the nature of reason to regard things, not as contingent, but as necessary (II. xliv.). Reason perceives this necessity of things (II. xli.) truly — that is (I. Ax. vi.), as it is in itself. But (I. xvi.) this necessity of things is the very necessity of the eternal nature of God; therefore, it is in the nature of reason to regard things under this form of eternity. We may add that the bases of reason are the notions (II. xxxviii.), which answer to things common to all, and which (II. xxxvii.) do not answer to the essence of any particular thing: which must therefore be conceived without any relation to time, under a certain form of eternity.

Prop. XLV. *Every idea of every body, or of every particular thing actually existing, necessarily involves the eternal and infinite essence of God.*

Proof. — The idea of a particular thing actually existing necessarily involves both the existence and the essence of the said thing (II. viii.). Now particular things cannot be conceived without God (I. xv.); but, inasmuch as (II. vi.) they have God for their cause, in so far as he is regarded under the attribute of which the things in question are modes, their ideas must necessarily involve (I. Ax. iv.) the conception of the attribute of those ideas — that is (I. vi.), the eternal and infinite essence of God. *Q. E. D.*

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PROP. XLVIII. *In the mind there is no absolute or free will; but the mind is determined to wish this or that by a cause, which has also been determined by another cause, and this last by another cause, and so on to infinity.*

Proof. — The mind is a fixed and definite mode of thought (II. xi.), therefore it cannot be the free cause of its actions (I. xvii. Coroll. ii.); in other words, it cannot have an absolute faculty of positive or negative volition; but (by I. xxviii.) it must be determined by a cause, which has also been determined by another cause, and this last by another, &c. *Q. E. D.*

Note. — In the same way it is proved, that there is in the mind no absolute faculty of understanding, desiring, loving, &c. Whence it follows, that these and similar faculties are either entirely fictitious, or are merely abstract or general terms, such as we are accustomed to put together from particular things. . . .

PROP. XLIX. *There is in the mind no volition or affirmation and negation, save that which an idea, inasmuch as it is an idea, involves.*

Proof. — There is in the mind no absolute faculty of positive or negative volition, but only particular volitions, namely, this or that affirmation, and this or that negation. Now let us conceive a particular volition, namely, the mode of thinking whereby the mind affirms that the three interior angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles. This affirmation involves the conception or idea of a triangle, that is, without the idea of a triangle it cannot be conceived. It is the same thing to say, that the concept A must involve the concept B, as it is to say, that A cannot be

conceived without B. Further, this affirmation cannot be made (II. Ax. iii.) without the idea of a triangle. Therefore, this affirmation can neither be nor be conceived, without the idea of a triangle. Again, this idea of a triangle must involve this same affirmation, namely, that its three interior angles are equal to two right angles. Wherefore, and *vice versa*, this idea of a triangle can neither be nor be conceived without this affirmation, therefore, this affirmation belongs to the essence of the idea of a triangle, and is nothing besides. What we have said of this volition (inasmuch as we have selected it at random) may be said of any other volition, namely, that it is nothing but an idea. *Q. E. D.*

Corollary. — Will and understanding are one and the same.

Proof. — Will and understanding are nothing beyond the individual volitions and ideas (II. xlviii. and note). But a particular volition and a particular idea are one and the same (by the foregoing Prop.); therefore, will and understanding are one and the same. *Q. E. D.*

Note. — We have thus removed the cause which is commonly assigned for error. For we have shown above, that falsity consists solely in the privation of knowledge involved in ideas which are fragmentary and confused. Wherefore, a false idea, inasmuch as it is false, does not involve certainty. . . .

It remains to point out the advantages of a knowledge of this doctrine as bearing on conduct, and this may be easily gathered from what has been said. The doctrine is good,

1. Inasmuch as it teaches us to act solely according to the decree of God, and to be partakers in the Divine nature, and so much the more, as we perform more perfect actions and more and more understand God. Such a doctrine not only completely tranquillizes our spirit, but also shows us where our highest happiness or blessedness is, namely, solely in the knowledge of God, whereby we are led to act only as love and piety shall bid us. We may thus clearly understand, how far astray from a true estimate of virtue are those who expect to be decorated by God with high rewards for their virtue, and their best actions, as for having endured the direst slavery; as if virtue and

the service of God were not in itself happiness and perfect freedom.

2. Inasmuch as it teaches us, how we ought to conduct ourselves with respect to the gifts of fortune, or matters which are not in our own power, and do not follow from our nature. For it shows us, that we should await and endure fortune's smiles or frowns with an equal mind, seeing that all things follow from the eternal decree of God by the same necessity, as it follows from the essence of a triangle, that the three angles are equal to two right angles.

3. This doctrine raises social life, inasmuch as it teaches us to hate no man, neither to despise, to deride, to envy, or to be angry with any. Further, as it tells us that each should be content with his own, and helpful to his neighbour, not from any womanish pity, favour, or superstition, but solely by the guidance of reason, according as the time and occasion demand.

4. Lastly, this doctrine confers no small advantage on the commonwealth; for it teaches how citizens should be governed and led, not so as to become slaves, but so that they may freely do whatsoever things are best.

PART V. OF THE POWER OF THE UNDERSTANDING, OR OF HUMAN FREEDOM

Preface

At length I pass to the remaining portion of my Ethics, which is concerned with the way leading to freedom. I shall therefore treat therein of the power of the reason, showing how far the reason can control the emotions, and what is the nature of Mental Freedom or Blessedness; we shall then be able to see, how much more powerful the wise man is than the ignorant. It is no part of my design to point out the method and means whereby the understanding may be perfected, nor to show the skill whereby the body may be so tended, as to be capable of the due performance of its functions. The latter question lies in the province of Medicine, the former in the province of Logic. Here, therefore,

I repeat, I shall treat only of the power of the mind, or of reason; and I shall mainly show the extent and nature of its dominion over the emotions, for their control and moderation.

. . . . . .

Axioms

I. If two contrary actions be started in the same subject, a change must necessarily take place, either in both, or in one of the two, and continue until they cease to be contrary.

II. The power of an effect is defined by the power of its cause, in so far as its essence is explained or defined by the essence of its cause.

(This axiom is evident from III. vii.)

Prop. I. *Even as thoughts and the ideas of things are arranged and associated in the mind, so are the modifications of body or the images of things precisely in the same way arranged and associated in the body.*

Proof. — The order and connection of ideas is the same (II. vii.) as the order and connection of things, and *vice versa* the order and connection of things is the same (II. vi. Coroll. and vii.) as the order and connection of ideas. Wherefore, even as the order and connection of ideas in the mind takes place according to the order and association of modifications of the body (II. xviii.), so *vice versa* (III. ii.) the order and connection of modifications of the body takes place in accordance with the manner, in which thoughts and the ideas of things are arranged and associated in the mind. *Q. E. D.*

Prop. II. *If we remove a disturbance of the spirit, or emotion, from the thought of an external cause, and unite it to other thoughts, then will the love or hatred towards that external cause, and also the vacillations of spirit which arise from these emotions, be destroyed.*

Proof. — That, which constitutes the reality of love or hatred, is pleasure or pain, accompanied by the idea of an external cause (Def. of the Emotions, vi. vii.); wherefore, when this cause is removed, the reality of love or hatred is removed with it; therefore these emotions and those which arise therefrom are destroyed. *Q. E. D.*

PROP. III. *An emotion, which is a passion, ceases to be a passion, as soon as we form a clear and distinct idea thereof.*

Proof. — An emotion, which is a passion, is a confused idea (by the general Def. of the Emotions). If, therefore, we form a clear and distinct idea of a given emotion, that idea will only be distinguished from the emotion, in so far as it is referred to the mind only, by reason (II. xxi. and note); therefore (III. iii.), the emotion will cease to be a passion. *Q. E. D.*

Corollary. — An emotion therefore becomes more under our control, and the mind is less passive in respect to it, in proportion as it is more known to us.

PROP. XXV. *The highest endeavour of the mind, and the highest virtue is to understand things by the third kind of knowledge.*

Proof. — The third kind of knowledge proceeds from an adequate idea of certain attributes of God to an adequate knowledge of the essence of things (see its definition, II. xl. note ii.); and, in proportion as we understand things more in this way, we better understand God (by the last Prop.); therefore (IV. xxviii.) the highest virtue of the mind, that is (IV. Def. viii.) the power, or nature, or (III. vii.) highest endeavour of the mind, is to understand things by the third kind of knowledge. *Q. E. D.*

PROP. XXVI. *In proportion as the mind is more capable of understanding things by the third kind of knowledge, it desires more to understand things by that kind.*

Proof. — This is evident. For, in so far as we conceive the mind to be capable of conceiving things by this kind of knowledge, we, to that extent, conceive it as determined thus to conceive things; and consequently (Def. of the Emotions, i.), the mind desires so to do, in proportion as it is more capable thereof. *Q. E. D.*

PROP. XXVII. *From this third kind of knowledge arises the highest possible mental acquiescence.*

Proof. — The highest virtue of the mind is to know God (IV. xxviii.), or to understand things by the third kind of knowledge (V. xxv.), and this virtue is greater in proportion as the mind knows things more by the said kind of knowledge (V. xxiv.): consequently, he who knows things by this kind of knowledge

passes to the summit of human perfection, and is therefore (Def. of the Emotions, ii.) affected by the highest pleasure, such pleasure being accompanied by the idea of himself and his own virtue; thus (Def. of the Emotions, xxv.), from this kind of knowledge arises the highest possible acquiescence. *Q. E. D.*

PROP. XXVIII. *The endeavour or desire to know things by the third kind of knowledge cannot arise from the first, but from the second kind of knowledge.*

Proof. — This proposition is self-evident. For whatsoever we understand clearly and distinctly, we understand either through itself, or through that which is conceived through itself; that is, ideas which are clear and distinct in us, or which are referred to the third kind of knowledge (II. xl. note ii.) cannot follow from ideas that are fragmentary and confused, and are referred to knowledge of the first kind, but must follow from adequate ideas, or ideas of the second and third kind of knowledge; therefore (Def. of the Emotions, i.), the desire of knowing things by the third kind of knowledge cannot arise from the first, but from the second kind. *Q. E. D.*

PROP. XXXI. *The third kind of knowledge depends on the mind, as its formal cause, in so far as the mind itself is eternal.*

Proof. — The mind does not conceive anything under the form of eternity, except in so far as it conceives its own body under the form of eternity (V. xxix.); that is, except in so far as it is eternal (V. xxi. xxiii.); therefore (by the last Prop.), in so far as it is eternal, it possesses the knowledge of God, which knowledge is necessarily adequate (II. xlvi.); hence the mind, in so far as it is eternal, is capable of knowing everything which can follow from this given knowledge of God (II. xl.), in other words, of knowing things by the third kind of knowledge (see Def. in II. xl. note ii.), whereof accordingly the mind (III. Def. i.), in so far as it is eternal, is the adequate or formal cause of such knowledge. *Q. E. D.*

Note. — In proportion, therefore, as a man is more potent in this kind of knowledge, he will be more completely conscious of himself and of God; in other words, he will be more perfect and blessed, as will appear more clearly in the sequel. . . .

PROP. XXXII. *Whatsoever we understand by the third kind of knowledge, we take delight in, and our delight is accompanied by the idea of God as cause.*

Proof. — From this kind of knowledge arises the highest possible mental acquiescence, that is (Def. of the Emotions, xxvi.) pleasure, and this acquiescence is accompanied by the idea of the mind itself (V. xxvii.), and consequently (V. xxx.) the idea also of God as cause. *Q. E. D.*

Corollary. — From the third kind of knowledge necessarily arises the intellectual love of God. From this kind of knowledge arises pleasure accompanied by the idea of God as cause, that is (Def. of the Emotions, vi.), the love of God; not in so far as we imagine him as present (V. xxix.), but in so far as we understand him to be eternal; this is what I call the intellectual love of God.

PROP. XXXIII. *The intellectual love of God, which arises from the third kind of knowledge, is eternal.*

Proof. — The third kind of knowledge is eternal (V. xxxi. I. Ax. iii.); therefore (by the same Axiom) the love which arises therefrom is also necessarily eternal. *Q. E. D.*

Note. — Although this love towards God has (by the foregoing Prop.) no beginning, it yet possesses all the perfections of love, just as though it had arisen as we feigned in the Coroll. of the last Prop. Nor is there here any difference, except that the mind possesses as eternal those same perfections which we feigned to accrue to it, and they are accompanied by the idea of God as eternal cause. If pleasure consists in the transition to a greater perfection, assuredly blessedness must consist in the mind being endowed with perfection itself.

PROP. XXXIV. *The mind is, only while the body endures, subject to those emotions which are attributable to passions.*

Proof. — Imagination is the idea wherewith the mind contemplates a thing as present (II. xvii. note); yet this idea indicates rather the present disposition of the human body than the nature of the external thing (II. xvi. Coroll. ii.). Therefore emotion (see general Def. of Emotions) is imagination, in so far as it indicates the present disposition of the body; therefore (V. xxi.)

the mind is, only while the body endures, subject to emotions which are attributable to passions. *Q. E. D.*

Corollary. — Hence it follows that no love save intellectual love is eternal.

Note. — If we look to men's general opinion, we shall see that they are indeed conscious of the eternity of their mind, but that they confuse eternity with duration, and ascribe it to the imagination of the memory which they believe to remain after death.

PROP. XXXV. *God loves himself with an infinite intellectual love.*

Proof. — God is absolutely infinite (I. Def. vi.), that is (II. Def. vi.), the nature of God rejoices in infinite perfection; and such rejoicing is (II. iii.) accompanied by the idea of himself, that is (I. xi. and Def. i.), the idea of his own cause: now this is what we have (in V. xxxii. Coroll.) described as intellectual love.

PROP. XXXVI. *The intellectual love of the mind towards God is that very love of God whereby God loves himself, not in so far as he is infinite, but in so far as he can be explained through the essence of the human mind regarded under the form of eternity; in other words, the intellectual love of the mind towards God is part of the infinite love wherewith God loves himself.*

Proof. — This love of the mind must be referred to the activities of the mind (V. xxxii. Coroll. and III. iii.); it is itself, indeed, an activity whereby the mind regards itself accompanied by the idea of God as cause (V. xxxii. and Coroll.); that is (I. xxv. Coroll. and II. xi. Coroll.), an activity whereby God, in so far as he can be explained through the human mind, regards himself accompanied by the idea of himself; therefore (by the last Prop.), this love of the mind is part of the infinite love wherewith God loves himself. *Q. E. D.*

Corollary. — Hence it follows that God, in so far as he loves himself, loves man, and, consequently, that the love of God towards men, and the intellectual love of the mind towards God are identical.

PROP. XXXVII. *There is nothing in nature, which is contrary to this intellectual love, or which can take it away.*

Proof. — This intellectual love follows necessarily from the

nature of the mind, in so far as the latter is regarded through the nature of God as an eternal truth (V. xxxiii. and xxix.). If, therefore, there should be anything which would be contrary to this love, that thing would be contrary to that which is true; consequently, that which should be able to take away this love, would cause that which is true to be false; an obvious absurdity. Therefore there is nothing in nature which, &c. *Q. E. D.*

Note. — The Axiom of Part IV. has reference to particular things, in so far as they are regarded in relation to a given time and place: of this, I think, no one can doubt.

PROP. XXXVIII. *In proportion as the mind understands more things by the second and third kind of knowledge, it is less subject to those emotions which are evil, and stands in less fear of death.*

Proof. — The mind's essence consists in knowledge (II. xi.); therefore, in proportion as the mind understands more things by the second and third kinds of knowledge, the greater will be the part of it that endures (V. xxix. and xxiii.), and, consequently (by the last Prop.), the greater will be the part that is not touched by the emotions, which are contrary to our nature, or in other words, evil (IV. xxx.). Thus, in proportion as the mind understands more things by the second and third kinds of knowledge, the greater will be the part of it that remains unimpaired, and, consequently, less subject to emotions, &c. *Q. E. D.*

PROP. XXXIX. *He, who possesses a body capable of the greatest number of activities, possesses a mind whereof the greatest part is eternal.*

Proof. — He who possesses a body capable of the greatest number of activities, is least agitated by those emotions which are evil (IV. xxxviii.) — that is (IV. xxx.), by those emotions which are contrary to our nature; therefore (V. x.), he possesses the power of arranging and associating the modifications of the body according to the intellectual order, and, consequently, of bringing it about, that all the modifications of the body should be referred to the idea of God; whence it will come to pass that (V. xv.) he will be affected with love towards God, which (V. xvi.) must occupy or constitute the chief part of the mind; there-

fore (V. xxxiii.), such a man will possess a mind whereof the chief part is eternal. *Q. E. D.*

Note. — Hence we understand that point which I touched on in IV. xxxix. note, and which I promised to explain in this Part; namely, that death becomes less hurtful, in proportion as the mind's clear and distinct knowledge is greater, and, consequently, in proportion as the mind loves God more. . . .

Prop. XL. *In proportion as each thing possesses more of perfection, so is it more active and less passive; and, vice versa, in proportion as it is more active, so is it more perfect.*

Proof. — In proportion as each thing is more perfect, it possesses more of reality (II. Def. vi.), and, consequently (III. iii. and note), it is to that extent more active and less passive. This demonstration may be reversed, and thus prove that, in proportion as a thing is more active, so is it more perfect. *Q. E. D.*

Corollary. — Hence it follows that the part of the mind which endures, be it great or small, is more perfect than the rest. For the eternal part of the mind (V. xxiii. xxix.) is the understanding, through which alone we are said to act (III. iii); the part which we have shown to perish is the imagination (V. xxi.), through which only we are said to be passive (III. iii. and general Def. of the Emotions); therefore, the former, be it great or small, is more perfect than the latter. *Q. E. D.*

Note. — Such are the doctrines which I had purposed to set forth concerning the mind, in so far as it is regarded without relation to the body; whence, as also from I. xxi. and other places, it is plain that our mind, in so far as it understands, is an eternal mode of thinking, which is determined by another eternal mode of thinking, and this other by a third, and so on to infinity; that all taken together at once constitute the eternal and infinite intellect of God.

Prop. XLII. *Blessedness is not the reward of virtue, but virtue itself; neither do we rejoice therein, because we control our lusts, but, contrariwise, because we rejoice therein, we are able to control our lusts.*

Proof. — Blessedness consists in love towards God (V. xxxvi.

and note), which love springs from the third kind of knowledge (V. xxxii. Coroll.); therefore this love (III. iii. lix.) must be referred to the mind, in so far as the latter is active; therefore (IV. Def. viii.) it is virtue itself. This was our first point. Again, in proportion as the mind rejoices more in this divine love or blessedness, so does it the more understand (V. xxxii.); that is (V. iii. Coroll.), so much the more power has it over the emotions, and (V. xxxviii.) so much the less is it subject to those emotions which are evil; therefore, in proportion as the mind rejoices in this divine love or blessedness, so has it the power of controlling lusts. And, since human power in controlling the emotions consists solely in the understanding, it follows that no one rejoices in blessedness, because he has controlled his lusts, but, contrariwise, his power of controlling his lusts arises from this blessedness itself. *Q. E. D.*

Note. — I have thus completed all I wished to set forth touching the mind's power over the emotions and the mind's freedom. Whence it appears, how potent is the wise man, and how much he surpasses the ignorant man, who is driven only by his lusts. For the ignorant man is not only distracted in various ways by external causes without ever gaining the true acquiescence of his spirit, but moreover lives, as it were unwitting of himself, and of God, and of things, and as soon as he ceases to suffer, ceases also to be.

Whereas the wise man, in so far as he is regarded as such, is scarcely at all disturbed in spirit, but, being conscious of himself, and of God, and of things, by a certain eternal necessity, never ceases to be, but always possesses true acquiescence of his spirit.

If the way which I have pointed out as leading to this result seems exceedingly hard, it may nevertheless be discovered. Needs must it be hard, since it is so seldom found. How would it be possible, if salvation were ready to our hand, and could without great labour be found, that it should be by almost all men neglected? But all things excellent are as difficult as they are rare.

NICOLAS MALEBRANCHE

(1638-1715)

A TREATISE OF MORALITY

Translated from the French by*

JAMES SHIPTON

CHAPTER I. THE IMMUTABLE ORDER

I. THE *reason* of man is the *word*, or the wisdom of God himself; for every creature is a particular being, but the reason of man is universal.

II. If my own particular mind were my reason and my light, my mind would also be the reason of all intelligent beings; for I am certain, that my reason enlightens all intelligent beings. No one can feel my pain but myself, but every one may see the truth which I contemplate; so that the pain which I feel is a modification of my own proper substance, but truth is a possession common to all spiritual beings.

III. Thus, by the means of reason, I have or may have some society with God, and all other intelligent beings; because they all possess something in common with me, to wit, reason.

IV. This spiritual society consists in a participation of the same intellectual substance of the word from which all spiritual beings may receive their nourishment. In contemplating this divine substance I am able to see some part of what God thinks; for God sees all truths, and there are some which I can see. I can also discover something of the will of God; for God wills nothing but according to a certain order, and this order is not altogether unknown to me. It is certain that God loves things according as they are worthy of love; and I can discover that there are some things more perfect, more valuable, and consequently more worthy of love than others.

* From *Traité de Morale*, Rott. 1684. Reprinted from N. Malebranche's *A Treatise of Morality*, translated by James Shipton, London, 1699.

V. It is true, indeed, that I cannot by contemplating the word or consulting reason be assured whether God doth actually produce anything out of his own being or no. For none of the creatures proceed naturally from the word; nor is the world a necessary emanation of the Deity; God is fully sufficient for himself; and the idea of a being infinitely perfect may be conceived to subsist alone. The creatures then suppose in God free and arbitrary decrees which give them their being. So that the word, as such, not containing in it the existence of the creatures, we cannot by the contemplation of it be assured of the action of God; but supposing that God doth act, I am able to know something of the manner in which he acts, and may be certain that he doth not act in such or such a manner. For that which regulates his manner of acting, the law which he inviolably observes, is the word, the eternal wisdom, the universal reason, which makes me rational, and which I can in part contemplate according to my own desires.

VI. If we suppose man to be a rational creature, we cannot certainly deny him the knowledge of something that God thinks, and of the manner in which he acts. For by contemplating the substance of the word, which alone makes me and all other intelligent beings rational, I can clearly discover the relations or proportions of greatness that are between the intellectual ideas comprehended in it; and these relations are the same eternal truths which God himself sees. For God sees as well as I that twice two is four, and that triangles which have the same base, and are between the same parallels, are equal. I can also discover, at least confusedly, the relations of perfection which are between the same ideas; and these relations are that immutable order which God consults when he acts, and which ought also to regulate the esteem and love of all intelligent beings.

VII. Hence it becomes evident that there are such things as true and false, right and wrong, and that too in respect of all intelligent beings; that whatsoever is true in respect of man, is true also in respect of angels, and of God himself; that what is injustice or disorder with relation to man, is so also with relation to God. For all spiritual beings contemplating the same intel-

lectual substance, necessarily discover in it the same relations of greatness, or the same speculative truths. They discover also the same practical truths, the same laws, and the same order, when they see the relations of perfection that are between those intellectual beings comprehended in the substance of the word, which alone is the immediate object of all our knowledge.

VIII. I say, when they see these relations of perfection or greatness, and not when they judge of them; for only truth or the real relations of things are visible, and we ought to judge of nothing but what we see. When we judge before we see, or of more things than we see, we are deceived in our judgment, or at least we judge ill, though we may happen by chance not to be deceived; for when we judge of things by chance, as well as when we judge by passion or interest, we judge ill because we do not judge by evidence and light. This is judging by ourselves and not by reason, or according to the laws of universal reason: that reason, I say, which alone is superior to spirits, and hath a right to judge of those judgments which are pronounced by them.

IX. The mind of man being finite cannot see all the relations that the objects of its knowledge bear to one another; so that it may be deceived when it judges of relations which it doth not see. But if it judged of nothing but just what it saw, which without doubt it may do; certainly though it be a finite spirit, though it be ignorant, and in its own nature subject to error, it would never be deceived; for then the judgments framed by it would not proceed so much from itself, as from the universal reason pronouncing the same judgments in it.

X. But God is infallible in his own nature; he cannot be subject to error or sin, for he is his own light, and his own law; reason is consubstantial with him, he understands it perfectly, and loves it invincibly. Being infinite he discovers all the relations that are comprehended in the intellectual substance of the word, and therefore cannot judge of what he doth not see. And as he loves himself invincibly, so he cannot but esteem and love other things according as they are valuable and according as they are amiable.

XIV. Since truth and order are relations of greatness and perfection, real immutable and necessary relations, relations com-

prehended in the substance of the divine word, he that sees these relations sees that which God sees; he that regulates his love according to these relations observes a law which God invincibly loves. So that there is a perfect conformity of mind and will between God and him. In a word, seeing he knows that which God knows, and loves that which God loves, he is like God, as far as he is capable of being so. So likewise since God invincibly loves himself he cannot but esteem and love his own image. And as he loves things in proportion to their being amiable, he cannot but prefer it before all those beings which either by their nature or corruption are far from resembling him.

XV. Man is a free agent, and I suppose him to have all necessary assistances: in respect of truth, he is capable of searching after it notwithstanding the difficulty he finds in meditation; and in respect of order, he is able to follow it, in spite of all the efforts of concupiscence. He can sacrifice his ease to truth, and his pleasures to order. On the other side he can prefer his actual and present happiness before his duty, and fall into error and disorder. In a word, he can deserve well or ill by doing good or evil. Now God is just; he loves his creatures as they are worthy of love, or as they resemble him. His will therefore is that every good action should be rewarded, and every evil one punished; that he who hath made a good use of his liberty, and by that means hath rendered himself in part perfect and like God, should be in part happy as he is, and the contrary.

XVI. It is God alone that acts upon his creatures; at least he hath a power of acting on them, and can do what he pleases with them. He hath power therefore to make spiritual beings happy or miserable; happy by the enjoyment of pleasure, and miserable by the suffering of pain. He can exalt the just and perfect above other men; he can communicate his power to them for the accomplishment of their desires, and make them occasional causes for himself to act by in a thousand manners. He can pull down the wicked, and make them subject to the action of the lowest beings: this experience sufficiently shows, for we all, as we are sinners, depend upon the action of sensible objects.

XVII. He therefore that labours for his perfection, and en-

deavours to make himself like God, labours for his happiness and advancement. If he doth that which in some sort depends upon himself, that is to say, if he deserves well by making himself perfect, God will do that which in no sort depends upon him, in making him happy. For since God loves all beings proportionately as they are amiable, and as the most perfect beings are the most amiable, they shall also be the most powerful, the most happy, and the most contented. He that incessantly consults his reason, and loves order, having a share in the perfection of God, shall have also a share in his happiness, glory, and greatness.

XVIII. Man is capable of three things: knowing, loving, and sensibly perceiving; of knowing the true good, of loving and enjoying it. The knowledge and love of good are in a great measure in his own power, but the enjoyment of it doth not at all depend upon himself. Nevertheless, seeing God is just, he that knows and loves him, shall also enjoy him. God, being just, must of necessity give the pleasure of enjoyment, and by it happiness, to him that by a painful application seeks the knowledge of the truth and by a right use of his liberty and the strength of his resolution, conforms himself to the law of God, the immutable order, notwithstanding all the efforts of concupiscence, enduring pain, despising pleasure, and giving that honour to his reason, as to believe it upon its word, and to comfort himself with its promises. It is a strange thing! Men know very well that the enjoyment of pleasure and avoiding of pain do not depend immediately on their desires. They find on the contrary that it is in their own power to have good thoughts, and to love good things, that the light of truth diffuses itself in them as soon as they desire it, and that the loving and following of order depends on themselves. And yet they seek after nothing but pleasure and neglect the foundation of their eternal happiness, that knowledge and love which resemble the knowledge and love of God, the knowledge of truth and the love of order; for as I said before, he that knows truth and loves order, knows as God knows and loves as he loves.

XIX. This then is our first and greatest duty, that for which God hath created us, the love of which is the mother of all virtue, the universal, the fundamental virtue; the virtue which makes us

just and perfect, and which will one day make us happy. We are rational creatures; our virtue and perfection is to love reason, or rather to love order. For the knowledge of speculative truths, or relations of greatness doth not regulate our duties. It is principally the knowledge and love of the relations of perfection, or practical truths wherein consist our perfection. Let us apply ourselves then to know, to love, and to follow order. Let us labour for our perfection; as for our happiness, let us leave that to the disposal of God on whom it wholly depends. God is just, and necessarily rewards virtue; let us not doubt then but that we shall infallibly receive all the happiness that we have deserved.

XX. The obedience which we pay to order and submission to the law of God is virtue in all senses. Submission to the divine decrees or to the power of God is rather necessity than virtue. A man may follow nature and yet walk irregularly, for nature itself is irregular. On the other side, he may resist the action of God, without opposing his orders; for oftentimes the particular action of God is so determined by second or occasional causes, that it is not conformable to order. It is true indeed that God wills nothing but according to order; but he often acts contrary to it: for order itself requiring that God as the general cause should act in a constant and uniform manner according to certain general laws which he hath established, the effects of that cause are many times contrary to order. He forms monsters, and is subservient as it were to the wickedness of men in this world, by reason of the simplicity of those ways by which he executes his designs. So that he who should think to obey God in submitting to his power, and in following and observing the course of nature, would offend against order, and fall into disobedience every moment.

XXI. If all the motions of bodies were caused by particular acts of the will of God it would be a sin to avoid the ruins of a falling house by flight; for we cannot without injustice refuse to render back to God that life which he hath given us when he requires it again. At this rate it would be an affront to the wisdom of God, to alter the course of rivers, and to turn them to places that want water; we should follow the order of nature and be quiet. But since God acts in consequence of certain general laws, we correct

his work without injuring his wisdom; we resist his action without opposing his will; because he doth not will positively and directly everything that he doth. For example, he doth not directly will unjust actions, though he alone gives motion to those that commit them; and though it be only he who sends rain, yet every man hath a liberty to shelter himself when it rains. For God doth not send rain but by a necessary consequence of general laws: laws which he hath established, not that such or such a man should be wet through, but for greater ends and more agreeable to his wisdom and goodness. If the rain fall upon men, upon the sea, or upon the sand, it is because he is not obliged to alter the uniformity of his conduct, for the uselessness or inconvenience of the consequences of it.

XXII. The case is not the same between God and men, between the general cause and particular ones. When we oppose the action of men we offend them; for since they act only by particular motions of the will, we cannot resist their action without opposing their designs. But when we resist the action of God we do not at all offend him, nay we often promote his designs; for since God constantly follows those general laws which he hath prescribed to himself, the combination of those effects which are the necessary consequences of them, cannot always be conformable to order, nor proper for the execution of his work. And therefore it is lawful for men to divert these natural effects, not only when they may be the occasion of their death, but also when they are inconvenient or disagreeable. Our duty then consists in submitting ourselves to the law of God, and following order: for to submit to his absolute power is necessity. This order we may know by our union with the word; so that the immutable order may be our law and our guide. But the divine decrees are absolutely unknown to us: and therefore let us not make them our rule. Let us leave that chimerical virtue of *following God or Nature* to the sages of Greece and the Stoics. But let us consult reason, let us love and follow order in all things; for then we truly follow God, when we submit to a law which he invincibly loves.

XXIII. But though the order of nature be not precisely our law, and a submission to that order be by no means a virtue, we

must observe nevertheless that we ought oftentimes to have a regard to it: yet still this is because the immutable order so requires, and not because the order of nature is an effect of the power of God. A man that suffers persecution, or rather one that is tormented with the gout, is obliged to bear it with patience and humility, because being a sinner, order requires that he should suffer, besides other reasons which need not here be produced. But if man were not subject to sin, and the immutable order did not require that he should suffer to deserve his reward, certainly he might, nay and ought to seek his ease, and avoid all sorts of inconveniences, though he were persecuted, if that were possible, by the inclemency of the seasons, and by the miseries which sin hath brought into the world. And a man, though he be a sinner, may shelter himself from the rain and the wind, and avoid the action of an avenging God; because order requires that he should preserve his strength and health, and especially the liberty of his mind, to think upon his duty, and search after truth; and because rain and wind being consequences of the general laws of the order of nature, it doth not plainly appear that it is the positive will of God that he should suffer that particular inconvenience. For it would be a heinous crime in us to avoid the rain, if God should make it rain on purpose to wet and punish us: as it was in our first parent to eat of a fruit, because of the express prohibition, and his formal disobedience. But if virtue consisted precisely in living in that condition wherein we are placed in consequence of the order of nature, he that is born in the midst of pleasure and abundance would be virtuous without pain; and nature having been happily favourable to him, he would follow it with pleasure. But virtue must be painful at present, that it may be generous and meritorious. A man ought to sacrifice himself for the possession of God: pleasure is the reward of merit, and therefore cannot be the foundation of it. In a word, truth itself informs us of one that was commanded to sell his goods, and distribute them to the poor, if he would be perfect; which was to change his state and condition. Perfection then or virtue doth not consist in following the order of nature, but in submitting wholly to the immutable and necessary order, the inviolable law of all intelligent beings.

JOHN LOCKE

(1632-1704)

AN ESSAY CONCERNING HUMAN UNDERSTANDING *

BOOK I. CHAPTER III. NO INNATE PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES

1. *No moral principles so clear and so generally received as the fore-mentioned speculative maxims.*—If those speculative maxims whereof we discoursed in the foregoing chapter, have not an actual universal assent from all mankind, as we there proved, it is much more visible concerning practical principles, that they come short of an universal reception; and I think it will be hard to instance any one moral rule which can pretend to so general and ready an assent as "What is, is," or to be so manifest a truth as this, "That it is impossible for the same thing to be, and not to be." Whereby it is evident, that they are farther removed from a title to be innate; and the doubt of their being native impressions on the mind is stronger against these moral principles than the other. Not that it brings their truth at all in question. They are equally true, though not equally evident. Those speculative maxims carry their own evidence with them; but moral principles require reasoning and discourse, and some exercise of the mind, to discover the certainty of their truth. They lie not open as natural characters engraven on the mind; which if any such were, they must needs be visible by themselves, and by their own light be certain and known to everybody. But this is no derogation to their truth and certainty: no more than it is to the truth or certainty of the three angles of a triangle being equal to two right ones, because it is not so evident as, "The whole is bigger than a part," nor so apt to be assented to at first hearing. It may suffice that these moral rules are capable of demonstration; and there-

* London, 1690; 2d enl. ed. 1694; 3d ed. 1695; 4th enl. ed. 1700; 5th corr. ed. 1706; ed. A. C. Fraser, 2 vols., Oxford, 1894.

fore it is our own fault if we come not to a certain knowledge of them. But the ignorance wherein many men are of them, and the slowness of assent wherewith others receive them, are manifest proofs that they are not innate, and such as offer themselves to their view without searching.

2. *Faith and justice not owned as principles by all men.* — Whether there be any such moral principles wherein all men do agree, I appeal to any who have been but moderately conversant in the history of mankind, and looked abroad beyond the smoke of their own chimneys. Where is that practical truth that is universally received without doubt or question, as it must be if innate? Justice, and keeping of contracts, is that which most men seem to agree in. This is a principle which is thought to extend itself to the dens of thieves, and the confederacies of the greatest villains; and they who have gone farthest towards the putting off of humanity itself, keep faith and rules of justice one with another. I grant, that outlaws themselves do this one amongst another; but it is without receiving these as the innate laws of nature. They practise them as rules of convenience within their own communities; but it is impossible to conceive that he embraces justice as a practical principle who acts fairly with his fellow-highwayman, and at the same time plunders or kills the next honest man he meets with. Justice and truth are the common ties of society; and therefore even outlaws and robbers, who break with all the world besides, must keep faith and rules of equity amongst themselves, or else they cannot hold together. But will any one say, that those that live by fraud and rapine have innate principles of truth and justice, which they allow and assent to?

3. *Objection. "Though men deny them in their practice, yet they admit them in their thoughts," answered.* — Perhaps it will be urged, that the tacit assent of their minds agrees to what their practice contradicts. I answer, First, I have always thought the actions of men the best interpreters of their thoughts; but since it is certain that most men's practice, and some men's open professions, have either questioned or denied these principles, it is impossible to establish an universal consent (though we should

look for it only amongst grown men); without which it is impossible to conclude them innate. Secondly, It is very strange and unreasonable to suppose innate practical principles that terminate only in contemplation. Practical principles derived from nature are there for operation, and must produce conformity of action, not barely speculative assent to their truth, or else they are in vain distinguished from speculative maxims. Nature, I confess, has put into man a desire of happiness, and an aversion to misery; these, indeed, are innate practical principles, which, as practical principles ought, do continue constantly to operate and influence all our actions without ceasing; these may be observed in all persons and all ages, steady and universal; but these are inclinations of the appetite to good, not impressions of truth on the understanding. I deny not that there are natural tendencies imprinted on the minds of men; and that, from the very first instances of sense and perception, there are some things that are grateful and others unwelcome to them; some things that they incline to, and others that they fly: but this makes nothing for innate characters on the mind, which are to be the principles of knowledge, regulating our practice.

4. *Moral rules need a proof; ergo, not innate.* — Another reason that makes me doubt of any innate principles, is, that I think there cannot any one moral rule be proposed whereof a man may not justly demand a reason; which would be perfectly ridiculous and absurd, if they were innate, or so much as self-evident; which every innate principle must needs be, and not need any proof to ascertain its truth, nor want any reason to gain it approbation. He would be thought void of common sense who asked on the one side, or on the other side went to give a reason, why it is impossible for the same thing to be, and not to be. It carries its own light and evidence with it, and needs no other proof; he that understands the terms assents to it for its own sake, or else nothing will ever be able to prevail with him to do it. But should that most unshaken rule of morality, and foundation of all social virtue, "That one should do as he would be done unto," be proposed to one who never heard it before, but yet is of capacity to understand its meaning; might he not without any absurdity ask

a reason why? and were not he that proposed it bound to make out the truth and reasonableness of it to him? which plainly shows it not to be innate; for if it were, it could neither want nor receive any proof, but must needs (at least as soon as heard and understood) be received and assented to as an unquestionable truth, which a man can by no means doubt of. So that the truth of all these moral rules plainly depends upon some other antecedent to them, and from which they must be deduced, which could not be if either they were innate, or so much as self-evident.

13. . . . Principles of actions, indeed, there are lodged in men's appetites; but these are so far from being innate moral principles, that, if they were left to their full swing, they would carry men to the overturning of all morality. Moral laws are sent as a curb and restraint to these exorbitant desires, which they cannot be but by rewards and punishments that will overbalance the satisfaction any one shall propose to himself in the breach of the law. If therefore anything be imprinted on the mind of all men as a law, all men must have a certain and unavoidable knowledge that certain and unavoidable punishment will attend the breach of it. For if men can be ignorant or doubtful of what is innate, innate principles are insisted on and urged to no purpose; truth and certainty (the things pretended) are not at all secured by them; but men are in the same uncertain, floating estate with as without them. An evident, indubitable knowledge of unavoidable punishment, great enough to make the transgression very uneligible, must accompany an innate law; unless with an innate law they can suppose an innate gospel too. I would not be here mistaken, as if, because I deny an innate law, I thought there were none but positive laws. There is a great deal of difference between an innate law and a law of nature; between something imprinted on our minds in this very original, and something that we, being ignorant of, may attain to the knowledge of by the use and due application of our natural faculties. And, I think, they equally forsake the truth who, running into the contrary extremes, either affirm an innate law, or deny that there is a law knowable by the light of nature; that is, without the help of positive revelation.

BOOK II. CHAPTER XX. OF MODES OF PLEASURE AND PAIN

1. *Pleasure and pain simple ideas.* — Amongst the simple ideas which we receive both from sensation and reflection, pain and pleasure are two very considerable ones. For as in the body there is sensation barely in itself, or accompanied with pain or pleasure; so the thought or perception of the mind is simply so, or else accompanied also with pleasure or pain, delight or trouble, call it how you please. These, like other simple ideas, cannot be described, nor their names defined: the way of knowing them is, as of the simple ideas of the senses, only by experience. For to define them by the presence of good or evil, is no otherwise to make them known to us than by making us reflect on what we feel in ourselves, upon the several and various operations of good and evil upon our minds, as they are differently applied to or considered by us.

2. *Good and evil, what.* — Things then are good or evil only in reference to pleasure or pain. That we call "good," which is apt to cause or increase pleasure, or diminish pain, in us; or else to procure or preserve us the possession of any other good, or absence of any evil. And, on the contrary, we name that "evil," which is apt to produce or increase any pain, or diminish any pleasure, in us; or else to procure us any evil, or deprive us of any good. By "pleasure" and "pain," I must be understood to mean of body or mind, as they are commonly distinguished; though, in truth, they be only different constitutions of the mind, sometimes occasioned by disorder in the body, sometimes by thoughts in the mind.

3. *Our passions moved by good and evil.* — Pleasure and pain, and that which causes them, good and evil, are the hinges on which our passions turn: and if we reflect on ourselves, and observe how these, under various considerations, operate in us, — what modifications or tempers of mind, what internal sensations (if I may so call them) they produce in us, — we may thence form to ourselves the ideas of our passions.

6. *Desire.* — The uneasiness a man finds in himself upon the absence of anything whose present enjoyment carries the idea of delight with it, is that we call "desire," which is greater or less as that uneasiness is more or less vehement. Where, by the by, it may perhaps be of some use to remark, that the chief, if not only, spur to human industry and action is uneasiness: for, whatever good is proposed, if its absence carries no displeasure nor pain with it, if a man be easy and content without it, there is no desire of it, nor endeavour after it; there is no more but a bare *velleity*, — the term used to signify the lowest degree of desire, and that which is next to none at all, when there is so little uneasiness in the absence of anything, that it carries a man no farther than some faint wishes for it, without any more effectual or vigorous use of the means to attain it. Desire also is stopped or abated by the opinion of the impossibility or unattainableness of the good proposed, as far as the uneasiness is cured or allayed by that consideration. This might carry our thoughts farther, were it seasonable in this place.

CHAPTER XXI. OF POWER

7. *Whence the ideas of liberty and necessity.* — Every one, I think, finds in himself a power to begin or forbear, continue or put an end to, several actions in himself. From the consideration of the extent of this power of the mind over the actions of the man, which every one finds in himself, arise the ideas of liberty and necessity.

12. *Liberty, what.* — As it is in the motions of the body, so it is in the thoughts of our minds: where any one is such, that we have power to take it up, or lay it by, according to the preference of the mind, there we are at liberty. A waking man, being under the necessity of having some ideas constantly in his mind, is not at liberty to think, or not to think, no more than he is at liberty, whether his body shall touch any other or no: but whether he will remove his contemplation from one idea to another, is many times in his choice; and then he is, in respect of his ideas, as much

at liberty as he is in respect of bodies he rests on: he can at pleasure remove himself from one to another. But yet some ideas to the mind, like some motions to the body, are such as in certain circumstances it cannot avoid, nor obtain their absence by the utmost effort it can use. A man on the rack is not at liberty to lay by the idea of pain, and divert himself with other contemplations.

13. *Necessity, what.* — Wherever thought is wholly wanting, or the power to act or forbear according to the direction of thought, there necessity takes place. This, in an agent capable of volition, when the beginning or continuation of any action is contrary to that preference of his mind, is called "compulsion;" when the hindering or stopping any action is contrary to this volition, it is called "restraint." Agents that have no thought, no volition at all, are in everything necessary agents.

14. *Liberty belongs not to the will.* — If this be so (as I imagine it is), I leave it to be considered, whether it may not help to put an end to that long agitated, and I think unreasonable, because unintelligible question, viz., Whether man's will be free or no? For, if I mistake not, it follows, from what I have said, that the question itself is altogether improper; and it is as insignificant to ask whether man's will be free, as to ask whether his sleep be swift, or his virtue square: liberty being as little applicable to the will, as swiftness of motion is to sleep, or squareness to virtue. Every one would laugh at the absurdity of such a question as either of these; because it is obvious that the modifications of motion belong not to sleep, nor the difference of figure to virtue: and when any one well considers it, I think he will as plainly perceive, that liberty, which is but a power, belongs only to agents, and cannot be an attribute or modification of the will, which is also but a power.

15. *Volition.* — Such is the difficulty of explaining and giving clear notions of internal actions by sounds, that I must here warn my reader that "ordering, directing, choosing, preferring," &c. which I have made use of, will not distinctly enough express volition, unless he will reflect on what he himself does when he wills. For example: "Preferring," which seems perhaps best to express the act of volition, does it not precisely. For though a

man would prefer flying to walking, yet who can say he ever wills it? Volition, it is plain, is an act of the mind knowingly exerting that dominion it takes itself to have over any part of the man, by employing it in or withholding it from any particular action. And what is the will, but the faculty to do this? And is that faculty anything more in effect than a power, — the power of the mind to determine its thought to the producing, continuing, or stopping any action, as far as it depends on us? For, can it be denied, that whatever agent has a power to think on its own actions, and to prefer their doing or omission either to other, has that faculty called "will"? Will then is nothing but such a power. Liberty, on the other side, is the power a man has to do or forbear doing any particular action, according as its doing or forbearance has the actual preference in the mind; which is the same thing as to say, according as he himself wills it.

16. *Powers belong to agents.* — It is plain then that the will is nothing but one power or ability, and freedom another power or ability: so that to ask whether the will has freedom, is to ask whether one power has another power, one ability another ability? a question at first sight too grossly absurd to make a dispute, or need an answer. For who is it that sees not, that powers belong only to agents, and are attributes only of substances, and not of powers themselves? So that this way of putting the question, viz., Whether the will be free? is in effect to ask, Whether the will be a substance, an agent? or at least to suppose it, since freedom can properly be attributed to nothing else. If freedom can with any propriety of speech be applied to power, it may be attributed to the power that is in a man to produce or forbear producing motions in parts of his body, by choice or preference; which is that which denominates him free, and is freedom itself. But if any one should ask whether freedom were free, he would be suspected not to understand well what he said; and he would be thought to deserve Midas's ears, who, knowing that "rich" was a denomination from the possession of riches, should demand whether riches themselves were rich.

29. *What determines the will.* — The will being nothing but a power in the mind to direct the operative faculties of a man

to motion or rest, as far as they depend on such direction; to the question, "What is it determines the will?" the true and proper answer is, The mind. For that which determines the general power of directing to this or that particular direction, is nothing but the agent itself exercising the power it has that particular way. If this answer satisfies not, it is plain the meaning of the question, "What determines the will?" is this, "What moves the mind in every particular instance to determine its general power of directing to this or that particular motion or rest?" And to this I answer, The motive for continuing in the same state or action is only the present satisfaction in it; the motive to change is always some uneasiness: nothing setting us upon the change of state, or upon any new action, but some uneasiness. This is the great motive that works on the mind to put it upon action, which for shortness' sake we will call "determining of the will;" which I shall more at large explain.

33. *The uneasiness of desire determines the will.* — Good and evil, present and absent, it is true, work upon the mind; but that which immediately determines the will, from time to time, to every voluntary action, is the uneasiness of desire, fixed on some absent good, either negative, as indolency to one in pain, or positive, as enjoyment of pleasure. That it is this uneasiness that determines the will to the successive voluntary actions whereof the greatest part of our lives is made up, and by which we are conducted through different courses to different ends, I shall endeavour to show both from experience and the reason of the thing.

35. *The greatest positive good determines not the will, but uneasiness.* — It seems so established and settled a maxim, by the general consent of all mankind, that good, the greater good, determines the will, that I do not at all wonder that, when I first published my thoughts on this subject, I took it for granted; and I imagine, that by a great many I shall be thought more excusable for having then done so, than that now I have ventured to recede from so received an opinion. But yet upon a stricter inquiry, I am forced to conclude that good, the greater good, though apprehended and acknowledged to be so, does not determine the

will until our desire, raised proportionably to it, makes us uneasy in the want of it. Convince a man never so much that plenty has its advantages over poverty; make him see and own that the handsome conveniences of life are better than nasty penury; yet as long as he is content with the latter, and finds no uneasiness in it, he moves not; his will is never determined to any action that shall bring him out of it. Let a man be never so well persuaded of the advantages of virtue, that it is as necessary to a man who has any great aims in this world or hopes in the next, as food to life: yet till he "hungers and thirsts after righteousness," till he feels an uneasiness in the want of it, his will will not be determined to any action in pursuit of this confessed greater good; but any other uneasiness he feels in himself shall take place and carry his will to other actions.

41. *All desire happiness.* — If it be farther asked, what it is moves desire? I answer, Happiness, and that alone. "Happiness" and "misery" are the names of two extremes, the utmost bounds whereof we know not: it is what "eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive." But of some degrees of both we have very lively impressions, made by several instances of delight and joy on the one side, and torment and sorrow on the other; which, for shortness' sake, I shall comprehend under the names of "pleasure" and "pain," there being pleasure and pain of the mind as well as the body: "With him is fulness of joy, and pleasure for evermore:" or, to speak truly, they are all of the mind; though some have their rise in the mind from thought, others in the body from certain modifications of motion.

42. *Happiness, what.* — Happiness, then, in its full extent, is the utmost pleasure we are capable of, and misery the utmost pain; and the lowest degree of what can be called "happiness" is so much ease from all pain, and so much present pleasure, as without which any one cannot be content. Now, because pleasure and pain are produced in us by the operation of certain objects either on our minds or our bodies, and in different degrees, therefore what has an aptness to produce pleasure in us is that we call "good," and what is apt to produce pain in us we

call "evil;" for no other reason but for its aptness to produce pleasure and pain in us, wherein consists our happiness and misery. Farther, though what is apt to produce any degree of pleasure be in itself good, and what is apt to produce any degree of pain be evil, yet it often happens that we do not call it so when it comes in competition with a greater of its sort; because when they come in competition, the degrees also of pleasure and pain have justly a preference. So that if we will rightly estimate what we call "good" and "evil," we shall find it lies much in comparison: for the cause of every less degree of pain, as well as every greater degree of pleasure, has the nature of good and *vice versa*.

43. *What good is desired, what not.* — Though this be that which is called "good" and "evil," and all good be the proper object of desire in general, yet all good, even seen and confessed to be so, does not necessarily move every particular man's desire; but only that part, or so much of it, as is considered and taken to make a necessary part of his happiness. . . .

Thus how much soever men are in earnest and constant in pursuit of happiness, yet they may have a clear view of good, great and confessed good, without being concerned for it, or moved by it, if they think they can make up their happiness without it. Though as to pain, *that* they are always concerned for; they can feel no uneasiness without being moved. And therefore, being uneasy in the want of whatever is judged necessary to their happiness, as soon as any good appears to make a part of their portion of happiness, they begin to desire it.

46. *Due consideration raises desire.* — And thus, by a due consideration, and examining any good proposed, it is in our power to raise our desires in a due proportion to the value of that good whereby, in its turn and place, it may come to work upon the will, and be pursued. For good, though appearing and allowed ever so great, yet till it has raised desires in our minds, and thereby made us uneasy in its want, it reaches not our wills, we are not within the sphere of its activity; our wills being under the determination only of those uneasinesses which are present to us, which (whilst we have any) are always soliciting, and ready

at hand to give the will its next determination; the balancing, when there is any in the mind, being only, which desire shall be next satisfied, which uneasiness first removed.

51. *The necessity of pursuing true happiness, the foundation of all liberty.* — As therefore the highest perfection of intellectual nature lies in a careful and constant pursuit of true and solid happiness, so the care of ourselves, that we mistake not imaginary for real happiness, is the necessary foundation of our liberty. The stronger ties we have to an unalterable pursuit of happiness in general, which is our greatest good, and which, as such, our desires always follow, the more are we free from any necessary determination of our will, to any particular action, and from a necessary compliance with our desire set upon any particular and then appearing preferable good, till we have duly examined whether it has a tendency to or be inconsistent with our real happiness: and therefore till we are as much informed upon this inquiry as the weight of the matter and the nature of the case demands, we are, by the necessity of preferring and pursuing true happiness as our greatest good, obliged to suspend the satisfaction of our desire in particular cases.

CHAPTER XXVIII. OF OTHER RELATIONS

4. *Moral.*— There is another sort of relation, which is the conformity or disagreement men's voluntary actions have to a rule to which they are referred, and by which they are judged of; which, I think, may be called "moral relation," as being that which denominates our moral actions, and deserves well to be examined, there being no part of knowledge wherein we should be more careful to get determined ideas, and avoid, as much as may be, obscurity and confusion. Human actions, when, with their various ends, objects, manners, and circumstances, they are framed into distinct complex ideas, are, as has been shown, so many mixed modes, a great part whereof have names affixed to them. Thus, supposing gratitude to be a readiness to acknowledge and return kindness received; polygamy to be the having

more wives than one at once: when we frame these notions thus in our minds, we have there so many determined ideas of mixed modes. But this is not all that concerns our actions; it is not enough to have determined ideas of them, and to know what names belong to such and such combinations of ideas. We have a farther and greater concernment; and that is, to know whether such actions so made up are morally good or bad.

5. *Moral good and evil.* — Good and evil, as hath been shown (book ii. chap. xx. sect. 2, and chap. xxi. sect. 42), are nothing but pleasure or pain, or that which occasions or procures pleasure or pain to us. Moral good and evil, then, is only the conformity or disagreement of our voluntary actions to some law, whereby good and evil is drawn on us from the will and power of the law-maker; which good and evil, pleasure or pain, attending our observance or breach of the law, by the decree of the law-maker, is that we call "reward" and "punishment."

6. *Moral rules.* — Of these moral rules or laws, to which men generally refer, and by which they judge of the rectitude or pravity of their actions, there seem to me to be three sorts, with their three different enforcements, or rewards and punishments. For since it would be utterly in vain to suppose a rule set to the free actions of man, without annexing to it some enforcement of good and evil to determine his will, we must wherever we suppose a law, suppose also some reward or punishment annexed to that law. It would be in vain for one intelligent being to set a rule to the actions of another, if he had it not in his power to reward the compliance with, and punish deviation from, his rule, by some good and evil that is not the natural product and consequence of the action itself. For that, being a natural convenience or inconvenience, would operate of itself without a law. This, if I mistake not, is the true nature of all law, properly so called.

7. *Laws.* — The laws that men generally refer their actions to, to judge of their rectitude or obliquity, seem to me to be these three: (1) The divine law. (2) The civil law. (3) The law of opinion or reputation, if I may so call it. By the relation they bear to the first of these, men judge whether their actions are sins

or duties; by the second, whether they be criminal or innocent; and by the third, whether they be virtues or vices.

8. *Divine law, the measure of sin and duty.* — First, The divine law, whereby I mean the law which God has set to the actions of men, whether promulgated to them by the light of nature, or the voice of revelation. That God has given a rule whereby men should govern themselves, I think there is nobody so brutish as to deny. He has a right to do it; we are his creatures. He has goodness and wisdom to direct our actions to that which is best; and he has power to enforce it by rewards and punishments, of infinite weight and duration, in another life; for nobody can take us out of his hands. This is the only true touchstone of moral rectitude; and by comparing them to this law it is that men judge of the most considerable moral good or evil of their actions; that is, whether as duties or sins they are like to procure them happiness or misery from the hands of the Almighty.

9. *Civil law, the measure of crimes and innocence.* — Secondly, The civil law, the rule set by the commonwealth to the actions of those who belong to it, is another rule to which men refer their actions, to judge whether they be criminal or no. This law nobody overlooks; the rewards and punishments that enforce it being ready at hand, and suitable to the power that makes it; which is the force of the commonwealth, engaged to protect the lives, liberties, and possessions of those who live according to its laws, and has power to take away life, liberty, or goods from him who disobeys; which is the punishment of offences committed against this law.

10. *Philosophical law, the measure of virtue and vice.* — Thirdly, The law of opinion or reputation. "Virtue" and "vice" are names pretended and supposed everywhere to stand for actions in their own nature right or wrong: and as far as they really are so applied, they so far are coincident with the divine law above mentioned. But yet, whatever is pretended, this is visible, that these names, "virtue" and "vice," in the particular instances of their application, through the several nations and societies of men in the world, are constantly attributed only to such actions as in each country and society are in reputation or

discredit. Nor is it to be thought strange, that men everywhere should give the name of "virtue" to those actions which amongst them are judged praiseworthy; and call that "vice," which they account blameable: since otherwise they would condemn themselves, if they should think anything right, to which they allowed not condemnation; anything wrong, which they let pass without blame. Thus the measure of what is everywhere called and esteemed "virtue" and "vice," is this approbation or dislike, praise or blame, which, by a secret and tacit consent establishes itself in the several societies, tribes, and clubs of men in the world, whereby several actions come to find credit or disgrace amongst them, according to the judgment, maxims, or fashions of that place. For though men uniting into politic societies have resigned up to the public the disposing of all their force, so that they cannot employ it against any fellow-citizen any farther than the law of the country directs; yet they retain still the power of thinking well or ill, approving or disapproving, of the actions of those whom they live amongst, and converse with; and by this approbation and dislike, they establish amongst themselves what they will call "virtue" and "vice."

11. That this is the common measure of virtue and vice, will appear to any one who considers, that though that passes for vice in one country which is counted a virtue, or at least not vice, in another; yet everywhere virtue and praise, vice and blame, go together. Virtue is everywhere that which is thought praiseworthy; and nothing else but that which has the allowance of public esteem is called "virtue.". . .

For since nothing can be more natural than to encourage with esteem and reputation that wherein every one finds his advantage, and to blame and discountenance the contrary, it is no wonder that esteem and discredit, virtue and vice, should in a great measure everywhere correspond with the unchangeable rule of right and wrong which the law of God hath established: there being nothing that so directly and visibly secures and advances the general good of mankind in this world, as obedience to the laws he has set them, and nothing that breeds such mischiefs and confusion as the neglect of them. And therefore men, without

renouncing all sense and reason, and their own interest, which they are so constantly true to, could not generally mistake in placing their commendation and blame on that side that really deserved it not. Nay, even those men whose practice was otherwise, failed not to give their approbation right, few being depraved to that degree as not to condemn, at least in others, the faults they themselves were guilty of: whereby, even in the corruption of manners, the true boundaries of the law of nature, which ought to be the rule of virtue and vice, were pretty well preserved. So that even the exhortations of inspired teachers have not feared to appeal to common repute: "Whatsoever is lovely, whatsoever is of good report, if there be any virtue, if there be any praise," [1] &c.

12. *Its enforcements, commendation, and discredit.* — If any one shall imagine that I have forgot my own notion of a law, when I make the law whereby men judge of virtue and vice to be nothing else but the consent of private men who have not authority enough to make a law; especially wanting that which is so necessary and essential to a law, a power to enforce it: I think I may say, that he who imagines commendation and disgrace not to be strong motives on men to accommodate themselves to the opinions and rules of those with whom they converse, seems little skilled in the nature or history of mankind: the greatest part whereof he shall find to govern themselves chiefly, if not solely, by this law of fashion; and, so they do that which keeps them in reputation with their company, little regard the laws of God or the magistrate. . . .

13. *These three laws the rules of moral good and evil.* — These three, then, First, The law of God, Secondly, The law of politic societies, Thirdly, The law of fashion, or private censure — are those to which men variously compare their actions: and it is by their conformity to one of these laws that they take their measures, when they would judge of their moral rectitude, and denominate their actions good or bad.

[1] Phil. iv. 8.

SAMUEL CLARKE
(1675-1729)

DISCOURSE UPON NATURAL RELIGION*

I. The same necessary and eternal different relations, that different things bear one to another, and the same consequent fitness or unfitness of the application of different things or different relations one to another, with regard to which, the will of God always and necessarily does determine itself, to choose to act only what is agreeable to justice, equity, goodness and truth, in order to the welfare of the whole universe, ought likewise constantly to determine the wills of all subordinate rational beings, to govern all their actions by the same rules, for the good of the public, in their respective stations. That is, these eternal and necessary differences of things make it fit and reasonable for creatures so to act; they cause it to be their duty, or lay an obligation upon them, so to do, even separate from the consideration of these rules being the positive will or command of God, and also antecedent to any respect or regard, expectation or apprehension, of any particular private and personal advantage or disadvantage, reward or punishment, either present or future, annexed either by natural consequence, or by positive appointment, to the practising or neglecting of those rules.

The several parts of this proposition, may be proved distinctly, in the following manner.

1. That there are differences of things, and different relations, respects or proportions, of some things towards others, is as evident and undeniable, as that one magnitude or number, is greater, equal to, or smaller than another. That from these different relations of different things, there necessarily arises an agreement or disagreement of some things with others, or a fitness or unfitness of the application of different things or different relations

* From Samuel Clarke's *A Discourse concerning the Unchangeable Obligations of Natural Religion*, London, 1706; *id.*, *Works*, *ib.*, 1738.

one to another, is likewise as plain, as that there is any such thing as proportion or disproportion in geometry and arithmetic, or uniformity or deformity in comparing together the respective figures of bodies. Further, that there is a fitness or suitableness of certain circumstances to certain persons, and an unsuitableness of others, founded in the nature of things and the qualifications of persons, antecedent to all positive appointment whatsoever; also that from the different relations of different persons one to another, there necessarily arises a fitness or unfitness of certain manners of behaviour of some persons towards others, is as manifest, as that the properties which flow from the essences of different mathematical figures, have different congruities or incongruities between themselves, or that, in mechanics, certain weights or powers have very different forces, and different effects one upon another, according to their different distances, or different positions and situations in respect of each other. For instance: that God is infinitely superior to men, is as clear, as that infinity is larger than a point, or eternity longer than a moment. And 't is as certainly fit, that men should honour and worship, obey and imitate God, rather than on the contrary in all their actions endeavour to dishonour and disobey Him, as 't is certainly true, that they have an entire dependence on Him, and He on the contrary can in no respect receive any advantage from them; and not only so, but also that His will is as certainly and unalterably just and equitable in giving His commands, as His power is irresistible in requiring submission to it.

Again; it is a thing absolutely and necessarily fitter in itself, that the supreme Creator of the universe, should govern, order and direct all things to certain and constant regular ends, than that everything should be permitted to go on at adventures, and produce uncertain effects merely by chance and in the utmost confusion, without any determinate view or design at all. 'T is a thing manifestly fitter in itself, that the all-powerful Governour of the world, should do always what is best in the whole, and what tends most to the universal good of the whole creation, than that he should make the whole continually miserable; or that, to satisfy the unreasonable desires of any par-

ticular depraved natures, he should at any time suffer the order of the whole to be altered and perverted. Lastly, 't is a thing evidently and infinitely more fit, that any one particular innocent and good being, should by the supreme Ruler and Disposer of all things, be placed and preserved in an easy and happy estate, than that, without any fault or demerit of its own, it should be made extremely, remedilessly, and endlessly miserable. In like manner, in men's dealing and conversing one with another, 't is undeniably more fit, absolutely and in the nature of the thing itself, that all men should endeavour to promote the universal good and welfare of all, than that all men should be continually contriving the ruin and destruction of all. 'T is evidently more fit, even before all positive bargains and compacts, that men should deal one with another according to the known rules of justice and equity, than that every man for his own present advantage, should without scruple disappoint the most reasonable and equitable expectations of his neighbours, and cheat and defraud, or spoil by violence, all others without restraint. Lastly, 't is without dispute more fit and reasonable in itself, that I should preserve the life of an innocent man, that happens at any time to be in my power, or deliver him from any imminent danger, though I have never made any promise so to do, than that I should suffer him to perish, or take away his life, without any reason or provocation at all.

These things are so notoriously plain and self-evident, that nothing but the extremest stupidity of mind, corruption of manners, or perverseness of spirit can possibly make any man entertain the least doubt concerning them. For a man endued with reason, to deny the truth of these things, is the very same thing, as if a man that has the use of his sight, should at the same time that he beholds the sun, deny that there is any such thing as light in the world; or as if a man that understands geometry or arithmetic, should deny the most obvious and known proportions of lines or numbers, and perversely contend that the whole is not equal to all its parts, or that a square is not double to a triangle of equal base and height. Any man of ordinary capacity, and unbiassed judgment, plainness and simplicity, who

had never read, and had never been told, that there were men and philosophers, who had in earnest asserted and attempted to prove, that there is no natural and unalterable difference between good and evil, would at the first hearing be as hardly persuaded to believe, that it could ever really enter into the heart of any intelligent man, to deny all natural difference between right and wrong, as he would be to believe, that ever there could be any geometer who would seriously and in good earnest lay it down as a first principle, that a crooked line is as straight as a right one. . . .

2. Now what these eternal and unalterable relations, respects, or proportions of things, with their consequent agreements or disagreements, fitnesses or unfitnesses, absolutely and necessarily are in themselves, that also they appear to be, to the understandings of all intelligent beings, except those only, who understand things to be what they are not, that is, whose understandings are either very imperfect, or very much depraved. And by this understanding or knowledge of the natural and necessary relations, fitnesses, and proportions of things, the wills likewise of all intelligent beings are constantly directed, and must needs be determined to act accordingly, excepting those only, who will things to be what they are not and cannot be; that is, whose wills are corrupted by particular interest or affection, or swayed by some unreasonable and prevailing passion. Wherefore since the natural attributes of God, his infinite knowledge, wisdom and power, set Him infinitely above all possibility of being deceived by any error, or of being influenced by any wrong affection, 't is manifest His divine will cannot but always and necessarily determine itself to choose to do what in the whole is absolutely best and fittest to be done; that is, to act constantly according to the eternal rules of infinite goodness, justice, and truth. As I have endeavoured to show distinctly in my former discourse, in deducing severally the moral attributes of God.

3. And now, that the same reason of things, with regard to which the will of God always and necessarily does determine itself to act in constant conformity to the eternal rules of justice, equity, goodness, and truth, ought also constantly to determine the wills of all subordinate rational beings, to govern all their

actions by the same rules, is very evident. For, as 't is absolutely impossible in nature, that God should be deceived by any error, or influenced by any wrong affection: so 't is very unreasonable and blameworthy in practice, that any intelligent creatures, whom God has made so far like unto himself as to endue them with those excellent faculties of reason and will, whereby they are enabled to distinguish good from evil, and to choose the one and refuse the other, should either negligently suffer themselves to be imposed upon and deceived in matters of good and evil, right and wrong, or wilfully and perversely allow themselves to be over-ruled by absurd passions, and corrupt or partial affections, to act contrary to what they know is fit to be done. Which two things, viz. negligent misunderstanding and wilful passions or lusts, are, as I said, the only causes which can make a reasonable creature act contrary to reason, that is, contrary to the eternal rules of justice, equity, righteousness and truth. For, was it not for these inexcusable corruptions and depravations, 't is impossible but the same proportions and fitnesses of things, which have so much weight and so much excellency and beauty in them, that the all-powerful Creator and Governour of the universe (who has the absolute and uncontrollable dominion of all things in his own hands, and is accountable to none for what he does, yet) thinks it no diminution of His power to make this reason of things the unalterable rule and law of his own actions in the government of the world, and does nothing by mere will and arbitrariness; 't is impossible (I say), if it was not for inexcusable corruption and depravation, but the same eternal reason of things must much more have weight enough to determine constantly the wills and actions of all subordinate, finite, dependent and accountable beings. For originally and in reality, 't is as natural and (morally speaking) necessary, that the will should be determined in every action by the reason of the thing, and the right of the case, as 't is natural and (absolutely speaking) necessary, that the understanding should submit to a demonstrated truth. And 't is as absurd and blameworthy, to mistake negligently plain right and wrong, that is, to understand the proportions of things in morality to be what they

are not, or wilfully to act contrary to known justice and equity, that is, to will things to be what they are not and cannot be, as it would be absurd and ridiculous for a man in arithmetical matters, ignorantly to believe that twice two is not equal to four, or wilfully and obstinately to contend, against his own clear knowledge, that the whole is not equal to all its parts. The only difference is, that assent to a plain speculative truth, is not in a man's power to withhold, but to act according to the plain right and reason of things, this he may, by the natural liberty of his will, forbear. But the one he ought to do, and 't is as much his plain and indispensable duty, as the other he cannot but do, and 't is the necessity of his nature to do it. . . .

Further: as it appears thus from the abstract and absolute reason and nature of things, that all rational creatures ought, that is, are obliged to take care that their wills and actions be constantly determined and governed by the eternal rule of right and equity: so the certainty and universality of that obligation is plainly confirmed, and the force of it particularly discovered and applied to every man, by this; that in like manner as no one, who is instructed in mathematics, can forbear giving his assent to every geometrical demonstration, of which he understands the terms, either by his own study, or by having had them explained to him by others; so no man, who either has patience and opportunities to examine and consider things himself, or has the means of being taught and instructed in any tolerable manner by others, concerning the necessary relations and dependencies of things, can avoid giving his assent to the fitness and reasonableness of his governing all his actions by the law or rule before mentioned, even though his practice, through the prevalence of brutish lusts, be most absurdly contradictory to that assent. That is to say: by the reason of his mind, he cannot but be compelled to own and acknowledge, that there is really such an obligation indispensably incumbent upon him, even at the same time that in the actions of his life he is endeavouring to throw it off and despise it. For the judgment and conscience of a man's own mind, concerning the reasonableness and fitness of the thing, that his actions should be conformed to such or such a rule or law, is the

truest and formallest obligation, even more properly and strictly so, than any opinion whatsoever of the authority of the giver of a law, or any regard he may have to its sanction by rewards and punishments. For whoever acts contrary to this sense and conscience of his own mind, is necessarily self-condemned; and the greatest and strongest of all obligations is that, which a man cannot break through without condemning himself. The dread of superior power and authority, and the sanction of rewards and punishments, however indeed absolutely necessary to the government of frail and fallible creatures, and truly the most effectual means of keeping them in their duty, is yet really in itself, only a secondary and additional obligation, or enforcement of the first. The original obligation of all (the ambiguous use of which word as a term of art, has caused some perplexity and confusion in this matter) is the eternal reason of things; that reason, which God himself who has no superior to direct Him, and to whose happiness nothing can be added nor anything diminished from it, yet constantly obliges Himself to govern the world by: and the more excellent and perfect (or the freer from corruption and depravation) any creatures are, the more cheerfully and steadily are their wills always determined by this supreme obligation, in conformity to the nature, and in imitation of the most perfect will of God. So far therefore as men are conscious of what is right and wrong, so far they are under an obligation to act accordingly; and consequently that eternal rule of right, which I have been hereto describing, 't is evident ought as indispensably to govern men's actions, as cannot but necessarily determine their assent.

7. Lastly, This law of nature has its full obligatory power, antecedent to all consideration of any particular private and personal reward or punishment, annexed either by natural consequence, or by positive appointment, to the observance or neglect of it. This also is very evident: Because, if good and evil, right and wrong, fitness and unfitness of being practised, be (as has been shown) originally, eternally, and necessarily, in the nature of things themselves, it is plain that the view of particular rewards or punishments, which is only an after-consideration, and does

not at all alter the nature of things, cannot be the original cause of the obligation of the law, but is only an additional weight to enforce the practice of what men were obliged to by right reason. There is no man, who has any just sense of the difference between good and evil, but must needs acknowledge, that virtue and goodness are truly amiable, and to be chosen for their own sake and intrinsic worth, though a man had no prospect of gaining any particular advantage to himself, by the practice of them: and that on the contrary, cruelty, violence and oppression, fraud, injustice, and all manner of wickedness, are of themselves hateful, and by all means to be avoided, even though a man had absolute assurance, that he should bring no manner of inconvenience upon himself by the commission of any or all of these crimes.

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Thus far is clear. But now from hence it does not at all follow, either that a good man ought to have no respect to rewards and punishments, or that rewards and punishments are not absolutely necessary to maintain the practice of virtue and righteousness in this present world. 'T is certain indeed, that virtue and vice are eternally and necessarily different, and that the one truly deserves to be chosen for its own sake, and the other ought by all means to be avoided, though a man was sure for his own particular, neither to gain nor lose anything by the practice of either. And if this was truly the state of things in the world, certainly that man must have a very corrupt mind indeed, who could in the least doubt, or so much as once deliberate with himself, which he would choose. But the case does not stand thus. The question now in the general practice of the world, supposing all expectation of rewards and punishments set aside, will not be, whether a man would choose virtue for its own sake, and avoid vice; but the practice of vice, is accompanied with great temptations and allurements of pleasure and profit, and the practice of virtue is often threatened with great calamities, losses, and sometimes even with death itself. And this alters the question, and destroys the practice of that which appears so reasonable in the whole speculation, and introduces a necessity of rewards and

punishments. For though virtue is unquestionably worthy to be chosen for its own sake, even without any expectation of reward, yet it does not follow that it is therefore entirely self-sufficient, and able to support a man under all kinds of sufferings, and even death itself, for its sake, without any prospect of future recompence. Here therefore began the error of the Stoics, who taught that the bare practice of virtue, was itself the chief good, and able of itself to make a man happy, under all the calamities in the world. Their defence indeed of the cause of virtue, was very brave: they saw well that its excellency was intrinsic, and founded in the nature of things themselves, and could not be altered by any outward circumstances; that therefore virtue must needs be desirable for its own sake, and not merely for the advantage it might bring along with it; and if so, then consequently neither could any external disadvantage, which it might happen to be attended with, change the intrinsic worth of the thing itself, or ever make it cease to be truly desirable. Wherefore, in the case of sufferings and death for the sake of virtue, not having any certain knowledge of a future state of reward (though the wisest of them did indeed hope for it, and think it highly probable), they were forced, that they might be consistent with their own principles, to suppose the practice of virtue a sufficient reward to itself in all cases, and a full compensation for all the sufferings in the world. And accordingly they very bravely indeed taught, that the practice of virtue was not only infinitely to be preferred before all the sinful pleasures in the world, but also that a man ought without scruple to choose, if the case was proposed to him, rather to undergo all possible sufferings with virtue, than to obtain all possible worldly happiness by sin. And the suitable practice of some few of them, as of Regulus for instance, who chose to die the cruellest death that could be invented rather than break his faith with an enemy, is indeed very wonderful and to be admired. But yet, after all this, 't is plain that the general practice of virtue in the world, can never be supported upon this foot. The discourse is admirable, but it seldom goes further than mere words, and the practice of those few who have acted

accordingly, has not been imitated by the rest of the world. Men never will generally, and indeed 't is not very reasonably to be expected they should, part with all the comforts of life, and even life itself, without expectation of any future recompence. So that, if we suppose no future state of rewards, it will follow that God has endued men with such faculties, as put them under a necessity of approving and choosing virtue in the judgment of their own minds, and yet has not given them wherewith to support themselves in the suitable and constant practice of it. The consideration of which inexplicable difficulty, ought to have led the philosophers to a firm belief and expectation of a future state of rewards and punishments, without which their whole scheme of morality cannot be supported. And, because a thing of such necessity and importance to mankind, was not more clearly and directly and universally made known, it might naturally have led them to some farther consequences also, which I shall have occasion particularly to deduce hereafter.

Thus have I endeavoured to deduce the original obligations of morality, from the necessary and eternal reason and proportions of things. Some have chosen to found all difference[1] of good and evil, in the mere positive will and power of God: but the absurdity of this, I have shown elsewhere. Others have contended, that all difference of good and evil, and all obligations of morality, ought to be founded originally upon considerations of public utility. And true indeed it is, in the whole; that the good of the universal creation, does always coincide with the necessary truth and reason of things. But otherwise (and separate from this consideration, that God will certainly cause truth and right to terminate in happiness), what is for the good of the whole creation, in very many cases, none but an infinite understanding can possibly judge. Public utility, is one thing to one nation, and the contrary to another, and the governours of every nation, will and must be judges of the public good, and by public good, they will generally mean the private good of that particular

[1] Cum omnis ratio veri et boni ab ejus Omnipotentia dependeat. *Cartes. Epist.* 6, *partis secundae.*

nation. But truth and right (whether public or private) founded in the eternal and necessary reason of things, is what every man can judge of, when laid before him. 'T is necessarily one and the same, to every man's understanding, just as light is the same, to every man's eyes.

THIRD EARL OF SHAFTESBURY

(1671–1713)

AN INQUIRY CONCERNING VIRTUE OR MERIT*

Book I. — Part II.

SECTION III. WHAT VIRTUE OR MERIT IS

But to proceed from what is esteemed mere goodness, and lies within the reach and capacity of all sensible creatures, to that which is called virtue or merit, and is allowed to man only.

In a creature capable of forming general notions of things, not only the outward beings which offer themselves to the sense, are the objects of the affection, but the very actions themselves, and the affections of pity, kindness, gratitude, and their contraries, being brought into the mind by reflection, become objects. So that, by means of this reflected sense, there arises another kind of affection towards those very affections themselves, which have been already felt, and are now become the subject of a new liking or dislike.

The case is the same in mental or moral subjects as in ordinary bodies, or the common subjects of sense. The shapes, motions, colours, and proportions of these latter being presented to our eye; there necessarily results a beauty or deformity, according to the different measure, arrangement, and disposition of their several parts. So in behaviour and actions, when presented to our understanding, there must be found, of necessity, an apparent difference, according to the regularity or irregularity of the subjects.

The mind, which is spectator or auditor of other minds, cannot be without its eye and ear; so as to discern proportion, distinguish sound, and scan each sentiment or thought which comes before it. It can let nothing escape its censure. It feels the soft

* First printed 1699. Reprinted in Shaftesbury's *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, and Times*, London, 1711, vol. ii.; *ib.* 1900.

and harsh, the agreeable and disagreeable in the affections; and finds a foul and fair, a harmonious and a dissonant, as really and truly here as in any musical numbers or in the outward forms or representations of sensible things. Nor can it withhold its admiration and ecstasy, its aversion and scorn, any more in what relates to one than to the other of these subjects. So that to deny the common and natural sense of a sublime and beautiful in things, will appear an affectation merely, to anyone who considers duly of this affair.

Now as in the sensible kind of objects, the species or images of bodies, colours, and sounds are perpetually moving before our eyes, and acting on our senses even when we sleep; so in the moral and intellectual kind, the forms and images of things are no less active and incumbent on the mind, at all seasons, and even when the real objects themselves are absent.

In these vagrant characters or pictures of manners, which the mind of necessity figures to itself, and carries still about with it, the heart cannot possibly remain neutral; but constantly takes part one way or other. However false or corrupt it be within itself, it finds the difference, as to beauty and comeliness, between one heart and another, one turn of affection, one behaviour, one sentiment and another; and accordingly, in all disinterested cases, must approve in some measure of what is natural and honest, and disapprove what is dishonest and corrupt.

Thus the several motions, inclinations, passions, dispositions, and consequent carriage and behaviour of creatures in the various parts of life, being in several views or perspectives represented to the mind, which readily discerns the good and ill towards the species or public, there arises a new trial or exercise of the heart, which must either rightly and soundly affect what is just and right, and disaffect what is contrary, or corruptly affect what is ill, and disaffect what is worthy and good.

And in this case alone it is we call any creature worthy or virtuous, when it can have the notion of a public interest, and can attain the speculation or science of what is morally good or ill, admirable or blamable, right or wrong. For though we may vulgarly call an ill horse vicious, yet we never say of a good one,

nor of any mere beast, idiot, or changeling, though ever so good-natured, that he is worthy or virtuous.

So that if a creature be generous, kind, constant, compassionate; yet if he cannot reflect on what he himself does, or sees others do, so as to take notice of what is worthy or honest, and make that notice or conception of worth and honesty to be an object of his affection, he has not the character of being virtuous: for thus, and not otherwise, he is capable of having a sense of right or wrong, a sentiment or judgment of what is done, through just, equal, and good affection, or the contrary.

Whatsoever is done through any unequal affection, is iniquitous, wicked, and wrong. If the affection be equal, sound, and good, and the subject of the affection such as may with advantage to society be ever in the same manner prosecuted, or affected; this must necessarily constitute what we call equity and right in any action. For wrong is not such action as is barely the cause of harm (since at this rate a dutiful son aiming at an enemy, but by mistake or ill chance happening to kill his father, would do a wrong), but when any thing is done through insufficient or unequal affection (as when a son shows no concern for the safety of a father; or, where there is need of succour, prefers an indifferent person to him), this is the nature of wrong.

Neither can any weakness or imperfection in the senses be the occasion of iniquity or wrong; if the object of the mind itself be not at any time absurdly framed, nor any way improper, but suitable, just, and worthy of the opinion and affection applied to it. For if we will suppose a man who, being sound and entire both in his reason and affection, has nevertheless so depraved a constitution or frame of body, that the natural objects are, through his organs of sense, as through ill glasses, falsely conveyed and misrepresented, 't will be soon observed, in such a person's case, that since his failure is not in his principal or leading part, he cannot in himself be esteemed iniquitous, or unjust.

'T is otherwise in what relates to opinion, belief, or speculation. For as the extravagance of judgment or belief is such that in some countries even monkeys, cats, crocodiles, and other

vile or destructive animals have been esteemed holy, and worshipped even as deities; should it appear to anyone of the religion or belief of those countries, that to save such a creature as a cat, preferably to a parent, was right, and that other men, who had not the same religious opinion, were to be treated as enemies till converted; this would be certainly wrong, and wicked in the believer; and every action, grounded on this belief, would be an iniquitous, wicked, and vicious action.

And thus whatsoever causes a misconception or misapprehension of the worth or value of any object, so as to diminish a due, or raise any undue, irregular, or unsocial affection, must necessarily be the occasion of wrong. Thus he who affects or loves a man for the sake of something which is reputed honourable, but which is in reality vicious, is himself vicious and ill. The beginnings of this corruption may be noted in many occurrences; as when an ambitious man, by the fame of his high attempts, a conqueror or a pirate by his boasted enterprises, raises in another person an esteem and admiration of that immoral and inhuman character, which deserves abhorrence, 't is then that the hearer becomes corrupt, when he secretly approves the ill he hears. But on the other side, the man who loves and esteems another, as believing him to have that virtue which he has not, but only counterfeits, is not on this account either vicious or corrupt.

A mistake therefore in fact being no cause or sign of ill affection, can be no cause of vice. But a mistake of right being the cause of unequal affection, must of necessity be the cause of vicious action, in every intelligent or rational being.

But as there are many occasions where the matter of right may even to the most discerning part of mankind appear difficult, and of doubtful decision, 't is not a slight mistake of this kind which can destroy the character of a virtuous or worthy man. But when, either through superstition or ill custom, there come to be very gross mistakes in the assignment or application of the affection; when the mistakes are either in their nature so gross, or so complicated and frequent, that a creature cannot well live in a natural state, nor with due affections compatible with hu-

man society and civil life; then is the character of virtue forfeited.

And thus we find how far worth and virtue depend on a knowledge of right and wrong, and on a use of reason, sufficient to secure a right application of the affections; that nothing horrid or unnatural, nothing unexemplary, nothing destructive of that natural affection by which the species or society is upheld, may on any account, or through any principle or notion of honour or religion, be at any time affected or prosecuted as a good and proper object of esteem. For such a principle as this must be wholly vicious; and whatsoever is acted upon it can be no other than vice and immorality. And thus if there be anything which teaches men either treachery, ingratitude, or cruelty, by divine warrant; or under colour and pretence of any present or future good to mankind; if there be anything which teaches men to persecute their friends through love, or to torment captives of war in sport, or to offer human sacrifice, or to torment, macerate, or mangle themselves, in a religious zeal before their God, or to commit any sort of barbarity, or brutality, as amiable or becoming: be it custom which gives applause, or religion which gives a sanction; this is not, nor ever can be, virtue, of any kind, or in any sense, but must remain still horrid depravity, notwithstanding any fashion, law, custom, or religion which may be ill and vicious itself, but can never alter the eternal measures, and immutable independent nature of worth and virtue.

Book II. — Part I.

SECTION I. THE OBLIGATION TO VIRTUE

We have considered what virtue is and to whom the character belongs. It remains to inquire, What obligation there is to virtue, or what reason to embrace it.

We have found that to deserve the name of good or virtuous, a creature must have all his inclinations and affections, his dispositions of mind and temper, suitable, and agreeing with the

good of his kind, or of that system in which he is included, and of which he constitutes a part. To stand thus well affected, and to have one's affections right and entire, not only in respect of oneself, but of society and the public, this is rectitude, integrity, or virtue. And to be wanting in any of these, or to have their contraries, is depravity, corruption, and vice.

It has been already shown, that in the passions and affections of particular creatures there is a constant relation to the interest of a species or common nature. This has been demonstrated in the case of natural affection, parental kindness, zeal for posterity, concern for the propagation and nurture of the young, love of fellowship and company, compassion, mutual succour, and the rest of this kind. Nor will anyone deny that this affection of a creature towards the good of the species or common nature is as proper and natural to him as it is to any organ, part, or member of an animal body, or mere vegetable, to work in its known course, and regular way of growth. 'T is not more natural for the stomach to digest, the lungs to breathe, the glands to separate juices, or other entrails to perform their several offices, however they may by particular impediments be sometimes disordered, or obstructed in their operations.

There being allowed therefore in a creature such affections, as these towards the common nature or system of the kind, together with those other which regard the private nature or self-system, it will appear that in following the first of these affections, the creature must on many occasions contradict and go against the latter. How else should the species be preserved? Or what would signify that implanted natural affection, by which a creature through so many difficulties and hazards preserves its offspring, and supports its kind?

It may therefore be imagined, perhaps, that there is a plain and absolute opposition between these two habits or affections. It may be presumed, that the pursuing the common interest or public good through the affections of one kind, must be a hindrance to the attainment of private good through the affections of another. For it being taken for granted that hazards and hardships of whatever sort are naturally the ill of the private

state, and it being certainly the nature of those public affections to lead often to the greatest hardships and hazards of every kind, 't is presently inferred, "that 't is the creature's interest to be without any public affection whatsoever."

This we know for certain, that all social love, friendship, gratitude, or whatever else is of this generous kind, does by its nature take place of the self-interesting passions, draws us out of ourselves, and makes us disregardful of our own convenience and safety. So that according to a known way of reasoning on self-interest, that which is of a social kind in us, should of right be abolished. Thus kindness of every sort, indulgence, tenderness, compassion, and in short, all natural affection should be industriously suppressed, and as mere folly and weakness or nature be resisted and overcome; that by this means there might be nothing remaining in us, which was contrary to a direct self-end; nothing which might stand in opposition to a steady and deliberate pursuit of the most narrowly confined self-interest.

According to this extraordinary hypothesis, it must be taken for granted, "that in the system of a kind or species, the interest of the private nature is directly opposite to that of the common one, the interest of particulars directly opposite to that of the public in general." A strange constitution! in which it must be confessed there is much disorder and untowardness, unlike to what we observe elsewhere in nature. As if in any vegetable or animal body the part or member could be supposed in a good and prosperous state as to itself, when under a contrary disposition and in an unnatural growth or habit as to its whole.

Now that this is in reality quite otherwise, we shall endeavour to demonstrate; so as to make appear, "that what men represent as an ill order and constitution in the universe, by making moral rectitude appear the ill, and depravity the good or advantage of a creature, is in nature just the contrary. That to be well affected towards the public interest and one's own is not only consistent but inseparable; and that moral rectitude, or virtue, must accordingly be the advantage, and vice the injury and disadvantage of every creature."

SECTION III. THE AFFECTIONS OR PASSIONS

It has been shown before, that no animal can be said properly to act, otherwise than through affections or passions, such as are proper to an animal. For in convulsive fits, where a creature strikes either himself or others, 't is a simple mechanism, an engine, or piece of clockwork, which acts, and not the animal.

Whatsoever therefore is done or acted by any animal as such, is done only through some affection or passion, as of fear, love, or hatred moving him.

And as it is impossible that a weaker affection should overcome a stronger, so it is impossible but that where the affections or passions are strongest in the main, and form in general the most considerable party, either by their force or number, thither the animal must incline: and according to this balance he must be governed and led to action.

The affections or passions which must influence and govern the animal, are either, —

1. The natural affections, which lead to the good of the public.

2. Or the self-affections, which lead only to the good of the private.

3. Or such as are neither of these, nor tending either to any good of the public or private, but contrariwise; and which may therefore be justly styled unnatural affections.

So that according as these affections stand, a creature must be virtuous or vicious, good or ill.

The latter sort of these affections, 't is evident, are wholly vicious. The two former may be vicious or virtuous according to their degree.

It may seem strange, perhaps, to speak of natural affections as too strong, or of self-affections as too weak. But to clear this difficulty we must call to mind what has been already explained, "that natural affection may, in particular cases, be excessive, and in an unnatural degree:" as when pity is so overcoming as to destroy its own end, and prevent the succour and relief required; or as when love to the offspring proves such a fondness as destroys the parent, and consequently the offspring itself.

And notwithstanding it may seem harsh to call that unnatural and vicious which is only an extreme of some natural and kind affection; yet 't is most certain, that wherever any single good affection of this sort is over-great, it must be injurious to the rest, and detract in some measure from their force and natural operation. For a creature possessed with such an immoderate degree of passion, must of necessity allow too much to that one, and too little to others of the same character, and equally natural and useful as to their end. And this must necessarily be the occasion of partiality and injustice whilst only one duty or natural part is earnestly followed, and other parts or duties neglected, which should accompany it, and perhaps take place and be preferred.

. . . . . .

Now as in particular cases, public affection, on the one hand, may be too high, so private affection may, on the other hand, be too weak. For if a creature be self-neglectful, and insensible of danger, or if he want such a degree of passion in any kind, as is useful to preserve, sustain, or defend himself, this must certainly be esteemed vicious in regard of the design and end of nature. She herself discovers this in her known method and stated rule of operation. 'T is certain that her provisionary care and concern for the whole animal must at least be equal to her concern for a single part or member. Now to the several parts she has given, we see, proper affections, suitable to their interest and security, so that even without our consciousness they act in their own defence, and for their own benefit and preservation. Thus an eye, in its natural state, fails not to shut together, of its own accord, unknowingly to us, by a peculiar caution and timidity; which if it wanted, however we might intend the preservation of our eye, we should not in effect be able to preserve it, by any observation or forecast of our own. To be wanting therefore in those principal affections which respect the good of the whole constitution, must be a vice and imperfection as great surely in the principal part (the soul or temper) as it is in any of those inferior and subordinate parts to want the self-preserving affections which are proper to them.

And thus the affections towards private good become necessary and essential to goodness. For though no creature can be called good or virtuous merely for possessing these affections, yet since it is impossible that the public good or good of the system can be preserved without them, it follows that a creature really wanting in them is in reality wanting to some degree in goodness and natural rectitude, and may thus be esteemed vicious and defective.

'T is thus we say of a creature, in a kind way of reproof, that he is too good, when his affection towards others is so warm and zealous as to carry him even beyond his part; or when he really acts beyond it, not through too warm a passion of that sort, but through an over-cool one of another, or through want of some self-passion to restrain him within due bounds.

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But having shown what is meant by a passion's being in too high, or in too low a degree; and that "to have any natural affection too high, or any self-affection too low," though it be often approved as virtue, is yet, strictly speaking, a vice and imperfection: we come now to the plainer and more essential part of vice, and which alone deserves to be considered as such: that is to say, —

"1. When either the public affections are weak or deficient.

"2. Or the private and self-affections too strong.

"3. Or that such affections arise as are neither of these, nor in any degree tending to the support either of the public or private system."

Otherwise than thus, it is impossible any creature can be such as we call ill or vicious. So that if once we prove that it is really not the creature's interest to be thus viciously affected, but contrariwise, we shall then have proved "that it is his interest to be wholly good and virtuous," since in a wholesome state of his affections, such as we have described, he cannot possibly be other than sound, good, and virtuous in his action and behaviour.

Our business, therefore, will be, to prove, —

I. "That to have the natural, kindly, or generous affections strong and powerful towards the good of the public, is to have

the chief means and power of self-enjoyment;" and "that to want them, is certain misery and ill."

II. "That to have the private or self-affections too strong, or beyond their degree of subordinacy to the kindly and natural, is also miserable."

III. And, "That to have the unnatural affections (viz. such as are neither founded on the interest of the kind, or public, nor of the private person or creature himself) is to be miserable in the highest degree."

Book II. — Part II.

SECTION I. THE NATURAL AFFECTIONS

To begin therefore with this proof, "That to have the natural affections (such as are founded in love, complacency, good-will, and in a sympathy with the kind or species) is to have the chief means and power of self-enjoyment."

We may inquire first what those are which we call pleasures or satisfactions, from whence happiness is generally computed. They are (according to the common distinction) satisfactions and pleasures either of the body or of the mind.

That the latter of these satisfactions are the greatest, is allowed by most people, and may be proved by this: that whenever the mind, having conceived a high opinion of the worth of any action or behaviour, has received the strongest impression of this sort, and is wrought up to the highest pitch or degree of passion towards the subject, at such time it sets itself above all bodily pain as well as pleasure, and can be no way diverted from its purpose by flattery or terror of any kind. Thus we see Indians, barbarians, malefactors, and even the most execrable villains, for the sake of a particular gang or society, or through some cherished notion or principle of honour or gallantry, revenge or gratitude, embrace any manner of hardship, and defy torments and death. Whereas, on the other hand, a person being placed in all the happy circumstances of outward enjoyment, surrounded with everything which can allure or charm the sense, and being

then actually in the very moment of such a pleasing indulgence, yet no sooner is there anything amiss within, no sooner has he conceived any internal ail or disorder, anything inwardly vexations or distempered, than instantly his enjoyment ceases, the pleasure of sense is at an end, and every means of that sort becomes ineffectual, and is rejected as uneasy and subject to give distaste.

The pleasures of the mind being allowed, therefore, superior to those of the body, it follows "that whatever can create in any intelligent being a constant flowing series or train of mental enjoyment, or pleasures of the mind, is more considerable to his happiness, than that which can create to him a like constant course or train of sensual enjoyments or pleasures of the body."

Now the mental enjoyments are either actually the very natural affections themselves in their immediate operation, or they wholly in a manner proceed from them, and are no other than their effects.

If so, it follows, that the natural affections duly established in a rational creature being the only means which can procure him a constant series or succession of the mental enjoyments, they are the only means which can procure him a certain and solid happiness.

Now, in the first place, to explain "how much the natural affections are in themselves the highest pleasures and enjoyments," there should methinks be little need of proving this to anyone of human kind who has ever known the condition of the mind under a lively affection of love, gratitude, bounty, generosity, pity, succour, or whatever else is of a social or friendly sort. He who has ever so little knowledge of human nature is sensible what pleasure the mind perceives when it is touched in this generous way. The difference we find between solitude and company, between a common company and that of friends; the reference of almost all our pleasures to mutual converse, and the dependence they have on society either present or imagined; all these are sufficient proofs in our behalf.

How much the social pleasures are superior to any other may be known by visible tokens and effects. The very outward fea-

tures, the marks and signs which attend this sort of joy, are expressive of a more intense, clear, and undisturbed pleasure, than those which attend the satisfaction of thirst, hunger, and other ardent appetites. But more particularly still may this superiority be known from the actual prevalence and ascendency of this sort of affection over all besides. Wherever it presents itself with any advantage, it silences and appeases every other motion of pleasure. No joy, merely of sense, can be a match for it. Whoever is judge of both the pleasures will ever give the preference to the former. But to be able to judge of both, 't is necessary to have a sense of each. The honest man indeed can judge of sensual pleasure, and knows its utmost force. For neither is his taste or sense the duller; but, on the contrary, the more intense and clear, on the account of his temperance and a moderate use of appetite. But the immoral and profligate man can by no means be allowed a good judge of social pleasure, to which he is so mere a stranger by his nature.

Nor is it any objection here, that in many natures the good affection, though really present, is found to be of insufficient force. For where it is not in its natural degree, 't is the same indeed as if it were not or had never been. The less there is of this good affection in any untoward creature, the greater the wonder is, that it should at any time prevail; as in the very worst of creatures it sometimes will. And if it prevails but for once, in any single instance, it shows evidently that if the affection were thoroughly experienced or known, it would prevail in all.

Thus the charm of kind affection is superior to all other pleasure, since it has the power of drawing from every other appetite or inclination. And thus in the case of love to the offspring and a thousand other instances, the charm is found to operate so strongly on the temper, as, in the midst of other temptations, to render it susceptible of this passion alone; which remains as the master-pleasure and conqueror of the rest.

There is no one who, by the least progress in science or learning, has come to know barely the principles of mathematics, but has found, that in the exercise of his mind on the discoveries he makes, though merely of speculative truths, he receives a plea-

sure and delight superior to that of sense. When we have thoroughly searched into the nature of this contemplative delight, we shall find it of a kind which relates not in the least to any private interest of the creature, nor has for its object any self-good or advantage of the private system. The admiration, joy, or love, turns wholly upon what is exterior, and foreign to ourselves. And though the reflected joy or pleasure, which arises from the notice of this pleasure once perceived may be interpreted a self-passion, or interested regard, yet the original satisfaction can be no other than what results from the love of truth, proportion, order, and symmetry in the things without. If this be the case, the passion ought in reality to be ranked with natural affection. For having no object within the compass of the private system, it must either be esteemed superfluous and unnatural (as having no tendency towards the advantage or good of anything in nature), or it must be judged to be what it truly is, "a natural joy in the contemplation of those numbers, that harmony, proportion, and concord which supports the universal nature, and is essential in the constitution and form of every particular species or order of beings."

But this speculative pleasure, however considerable and valuable it may be, or however superior to any motion of mere sense, must yet be far surpassed by virtuous motion, and the exercise of benignity and goodness, where, together with the most delightful affection of the soul, there is joined a pleasing assent and approbation of the mind to what is acted in this good disposition and honest bent. For where is there on earth a fairer matter of speculation, a goodlier view or contemplation, than that of a beautiful, proportioned, and becoming action? Or what is there relating to us, of which the consciousness and memory is more solidly and lastingly entertaining?

We may observe that in the passion of love between the sexes, where, together with the affection of a vulgar sort, there is a mixture of the kind and friendly, the sense or feeling of this latter is in reality superior to the former; since often through this affection, and for the sake of the person beloved, the greatest hardships in the world have been submitted to, and even death

itself voluntarily embraced, without any expected compensation. For where should the ground of such an expectation lie? Not here, in this world surely; for death puts an end to all. Nor yet hereafter, in any other; for who has ever thought of providing a heaven or future recompence for the suffering virtue of lovers?

We may observe withal, in favour of the natural affections, that it is not only when joy and sprightliness are mixed with them that they carry a real enjoyment above that of the sensual kind. The very disturbances which belong to natural affection, though they may be thought wholly contrary to pleasure, yield still a contentment and satisfaction greater than the pleasures of indulged sense. And where a series or continued succession of the tender and kind affections can be carried on, even through fears, horrors, sorrows, griefs, the emotion of the soul is still agreeable. We continue pleased even with this melancholy aspect or sense of virtue. Her beauty supports itself under a cloud, and in the midst of surrounding calamities. For thus when by mere illusion, as in a tragedy, the passions of this kind are skilfully excited in us, we prefer the entertainment to any other of equal duration. We find by ourselves that the moving our passions in this mournful way, the engaging them in behalf of merit and worth, and the exerting whatever we have of social affection and human sympathy, is of the highest delight, and affords a greater enjoyment in the way of thought and sentiment, than anything besides can do in a way of sense and common appetite. And after this manner it appears "how much the mental enjoyments are actually the very natural affections themselves."

Now, in the next place, to explain "how they proceed from them, as their natural effects," we may consider first, that the effects of love or kind affection, in a way of mental pleasure, are, "An enjoyment of good by communication: a receiving it, as it were by reflection, or by way of participation in the good of others;" and "a pleasing consciousness of the actual love, merited esteem, or approbation of others."

How considerable a part of happiness arises from the former of these effects will be easily apprehended by one who is not exceedingly ill natured. It will be considered how many the plea-

sures are of sharing contentment and delight with others; of receiving it in fellowship and company; and gathering it, in a manner, from the pleased and happy states of those around us, from accounts and relations of such happinesses, from the very countenances, gestures, voices, and sounds, even of creatures foreign to our kind, whose signs of joy and contentment we can anyway discern. So insinuating are these pleasures of sympathy, and so widely diffused through our whole lives, that there is hardly such a thing as satisfaction or contentment, of which they make not an essential part.

As for that other effect of social love, viz. the consciousness of merited kindness or esteem, 't is not difficult to perceive how much this avails in mental pleasure, and constitutes the chief enjoyment and happiness of those who are, in the narrowest sense, voluptuous. How natural is it for the most selfish among us to be continually drawing some sort of satisfaction from a character, and pleasing ourselves in the fancy of deserved admiration and esteem? For though it be mere fancy, we endeavour still to believe it truth, and flatter ourselves all we can with the thought of merit of some kind, and the persuasion of our deserving well from some few at least with whom we happen to have a more intimate and familiar commerce.

What tyrant is there, what robber, or open violator of the laws of society, who has not a companion, or some particular sect, either of his own kindred, or such as he calls friends, with whom he gladly shares his good, in whose welfare he delights, and whose joy and satisfaction he makes his own? What person in the world is there who receives not some impressions from the flattery or kindness of such as are familiar with him? 'T is to this soothing hope and expectation of friendship, that almost all our actions have some reference. 'T is this which goes through our whole lives, and mixes itself even with most of our vices. Of this, vanity, ambition, and luxury, have a share, and many other disorders of our life partake. Even the unchastest love borrows largely from this source. So that were pleasure to be computed in the same way as other things commonly are it might properly be said, that out of these two branches (viz. community or par-

ticipation in the pleasures of others, and belief of meriting well from others) would arise more than nine tenths of whatever is enjoyed in life. And thus in the main sum of happiness, there is scarce a single article, but what derives itself from social love, and depends immediately on the natural and kind affections.

From all this we may easily conclude, how much our happiness depends on natural and good affection. For if the chief happiness be from the mental pleasures; and the chief mental pleasures are such as we have described, and are founded in natural affection; it follows, "That to have the natural affections, is to have the chief means and power of self-enjoyment, the highest possession and happiness of life."

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SECTION II. THE SELF-AFFECTIONS

We are now to prove, that by having the self-passions too intense or strong, a creature becomes miserable.

In order to this we must, according to method, enumerate those home-affections which relate to the private interest or separate economy of the creature, such as love of life; resentment of injury; pleasure, or appetite towards nourishment and the means of generation; interest, or desire of those conveniences by which we are all well provided for and maintained; emulation, or love of praise and honour; indolence, or love of ease and rest. — These are the affections which relate to the private system, and constitute whatever we call interestedness or self-love.

Now these affections, if they are moderate and within certain bounds, are neither injurious to social life nor a hindrance to virtue; but being in an extreme degree, they become cowardice, revengefulness, luxury, avarice, vanity and ambition, sloth; and as such, are owned vicious and ill with respect to human society. How they are ill also with respect to the private person, and are to his own disadvantage as well as that of the public, we may consider, as we severally examine them.

If there were any of these self-passions which for the good and

happiness of the creature might be opposed to natural affection, and allowed to over-balance it, the desire and love of life would have the best pretence. But it will be found perhaps, that there is no passion which, by having much allowed to it, is the occasion of more disorder and misery.

There is nothing more certain, or more universally agreed than this, "that life may sometimes be even a misfortune and misery." To enforce the continuance of it in creatures reduced to such extremity is esteemed the greatest cruelty. And though religion forbids that any one should be his own reliever, yet if by some fortunate accident, death offers of itself, it is embraced as highly welcome. And on this account the nearest friends and relations often rejoice at the release of one entirely beloved, even though he himself may have been so weak as earnestly to decline death, and endeavour the utmost prolongment of his own uneligible state.

Since life, therefore, may frequently prove a misfortune and misery, and since it naturally becomes so by being only prolonged to the infirmities of old age; since there is nothing, withal, more common than to see life over-valued, and purchased at such a cost as it can never justly be thought worth, it follows evidently; that the passion itself (viz. the love of life, and abhorrence or dread of death) if beyond a certain degree, and over-balancing in the temper of any creature, must lead him directly against his own interest; make him, upon occasion, become the greatest enemy to himself, and necessitate him to act as such.

But though it were allowed the interest and good of a creature, by all courses and means whatsoever, in any circumstances, or at any rate, to preserve life; yet would it be against his interest still to have this passion in a high degree. For it would by this means prove ineffectual, and noway conducing to its end. Various instances need not be given. For what is there better known, than that at all times an excessive fear betrays to danger instead of saving from it? 'T is impossible for any one to act sensibly and with presence of mind, even in his own preservation and defence, when he is strongly pressed by such a passion. On all extraordinary emergences, 't is courage and resolution saves,

whilst cowardice robs us of the means of safety, and not only deprives us of our defensive faculties, but even runs us to the brink of ruin, and makes us meet that evil which of itself would never have invaded us.

But were the consequences of this passion less injurious than we have represented, it must be allowed still that in itself it can be no other than miserable, if it be misery to feel cowardice, and be haunted by those spectres and horrors which are proper to the character of one who has a thorough dread of death. For 't is not only when dangers happen, and hazards are incurred, that this sort of fear oppresses and distracts. If it in the least prevails, it gives no quarter so much as at the safest stillest hour of retreat and quiet. Every object suggests thought enough to employ it. It operates when it is least observed by others, and enters at all times into the pleasantest parts of life, so as to corrupt and poison all enjoyment and content. One may safely aver that by reason of this passion alone many a life, if inwardly and closely viewed, would be found to be thoroughly miserable, though attended with all other circumstances which in appearance render it happy. But when we add to this the meannesses and base condescensions occasioned by such a passionate concern for living, when we consider how by means of it we are driven to actions we can never view without dislike, and forced by degrees from our natural conduct into still greater crookednesses and perplexity, there is no one surely so disingenuous as not to allow that life in this case becomes a sorry purchase, and is passed with little freedom or satisfaction. For how can this be otherwise, whilst everything which is generous and worthy, even the chief relish, happiness, and good of life, is for life's sake abandoned and renounced?

And thus it seems evident, "that to have this affection of desire and love of life too intense, or beyond a moderate degree, is against the interest of a creature, and contrary to his happiness and good."

There is another passion very different from that of fear and which in a certain degree is equally preservative to us, and conducing to our safety. As that is serviceable in prompting us to

shun danger, so is this in fortifying us against it, and enabling us to repel injury and resist violence when offered. 'T is true that according to strict virtue, and a just regulation of the affections in a wise and virtuous man, such efforts towards action amount not to what is justly styled passion or commotion. A man of courage may be cautious without real fear; and a man of temper may resist or punish without anger; but in ordinary characters there must necessarily be some mixture of the real passions themselves, which, however, in the main, are able to allay and temper one another. And thus anger in a manner becomes necessary. 'T is by this passion that one creature offering violence to another is deterred from the execution, whilst he observes how the attempt affects his fellow, and knows by the very signs which accompany this rising motion, that if the injury be carried further it will not pass easily or with impunity. . . . As to this affection therefore, notwithstanding its immediate aim be indeed the ill or punishment of another, yet it is plainly of the sort of those which tend to the advantage and interest of the self-system, the animal himself; and is withal in other respects contributing to the good and interest of the species.

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Thus have we considered the self-passions, and what the consequence is of their rising beyond a moderate degree. These affections, as self-interesting as they are, can often, we see, become contrary to our real interest. They betray us into most misfortunes and into the greatest of unhappinesses, that of a profligate and abject character. As they grow imperious and high, they are the occasion that a creature in proportion becomes mean and low. They are original to that which we call selfishness, and give rise to that sordid disposition of which we have already spoken. It appears there can be nothing so miserable in itself, or so wretched in its consequence, as to be thus impotent in temper, thus mastered by passion, and by means of it brought under the most servile subjection to the world.

'T is evident, withal, that as this selfishness increases in us, so must a certain subtlety and feignedness of carriage which naturally accompanies it. And thus the candour and ingenuity

of our natures, the ease and freedom of our minds must be forfeited; all trust and confidence in a manner lost, and suspicions, jealousies, and envies multiplied. A separate end and interest must be every day more strongly formed in us; generous views and motives laid aside; and the more we are thus sensibly disjoined every day from society and our fellows, the worse opinion we shall have of those uniting passions which bind us in strict alliance and amity with others. Upon these terms we must of course endeavour to silence and suppress our natural and good affections, since they are such as would carry us to the good of society, against what we fondly conceive to be our private good and interest, as has been shown.

Now if these selfish passions, besides what other ill they are the occasion of, are withal the certain means of losing us our natural affections; then (by what has been proved before) 't is evident "that they must be the certain means of losing us the chief enjoyment of life, and raising in us those horrid and unnatural passions, and that savageness of temper, which makes the greatest of miseries, and the most wretched state of life:" as remains for us to explain.

SECTION III. THE UNNATURAL AFFECTIONS

The passions therefore, which, in the last place, we are to examine, are those which lead neither to a public nor a private good, and are neither of any advantage to the species in general, or the creature in particular. These, in opposition to the social and natural, we call the unnatural affections.

Of this kind is that unnatural and inhuman delight in beholding torments, and in viewing distress, calamity, blood, massacre, and destruction, with a peculiar joy and pleasure. This has been the reigning passion of many tyrants and barbarous nations, and belongs in some degree to such tempers as have thrown off that courteousness of behaviour which retains in us a just reverence of mankind, and prevents the growth of harshness and brutality. This passion enters not where civility or affable man-

ners have the least place. Such is the nature of what we call good breeding, that in the midst of many other corruptions, it admits not of inhumanity or savage pleasure. To see the suferance of an enemy with cruel delight may proceed from the height of anger, revenge, fear, and other extended self-passions; but to delight in the torture and pain of other creatures indifferently, natives or foreigners, of our own or of another species, kindred or no kindred, known or unknown; to feed as it were on death, and be entertained with dying agonies; this has nothing in it accountable in the way of self-interest or private good above mentioned, but is wholly and absolutely unnatural, as it is horrid and miserable.

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There is also among these a sort of hatred of mankind and society, a passion which has been known perfectly reigning in some men, and has had a peculiar name given to it. A large share of this belongs to those who have long indulged themselves in a habitual moroseness, or who by force of ill nature, and ill breeding, have contracted such a reverse of affability and civil manners that to see or meet a stranger is offensive. The very aspect of mankind is a disturbance to them, and they are sure always to hate at first sight. The distemper of this kind is sometimes found to be in a manner national, but peculiar to the more savage nations, and a plain characteristic of uncivilized manners, and barbarity. This is the immediate opposite to that noble affection, which in ancient language was termed hospitality, viz. extensive love of mankind and relief of strangers.

It may be objected here, that these passions, unnatural as they are, carry still a sort of pleasure with them, and that however barbarous a pleasure it be, yet still it is a pleasure and satisfaction which is found in pride, or tyranny, revenge, malice, or cruelty exerted. Now if it be possible in nature that any one can feel a barbarous or malicious joy otherwise than in consequence of mere anguish and torment, then may we perhaps allow this kind of satisfaction to be called pleasure or delight. But the case is evidently contrary. To love, and to be kind; to have social or natural affection, complacency, and good-will, is to feel

immediate satisfaction and genuine content. 'T is in itself original joy depending on no preceding pain or uneasiness, and producing nothing beside satisfaction merely. On the other side animosity, hatred, and bitterness, is original misery and torment, producing no other pleasure or satisfaction, than as the unnatural desire is for the instant satisfied by something which appeases it. How strong soever this pleasure therefore may appear, it only the more implies the misery of that state which produces it. For as the cruellest bodily pains do by intervals of assuagement produce (as has been shown) the highest bodily pleasure, so the fiercest and most raging torments of the mind do, by certain moments of relief, afford the greatest of mental enjoyments to those who know little of the truer kind.

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Now as to the consequences of this unnatural state in respect of interest and the common circumstances of life; upon what terms a person who has in this manner lost all which we call nature can be supposed to stand in respect of the society of mankind; how he feels himself in it; what sense he has of his own disposition towards others, and of the mutual disposition of others towards himself; this is easily conceived.

What enjoyment or rest is there for one, who is not conscious of the merited affection or love, but, on the contrary, of the ill-will and hatred of every human soul? What ground must this afford for horror and despair? What foundation of fear, and continual apprehension from mankind and from superior powers? How thorough and deep must be that melancholy which being once moved, has nothing soft or pleasing from the side of friendship to allay or divert it? Wherever such a creature turns himself, whichever way he casts his eye, every thing around must appear ghastly and horrid; every thing hostile and, as it were, bent against a private and single being, who is thus divided from every thing, and at defiance and war with the rest of nature.

'T is thus, at last, that a mind becomes a wilderness, where all is laid waste, everything fair and goodly removed, and nothing extant beside what is savage and deformed. Now if banishment from one's country, removal to a foreign place, or anything which

looks like solitude or desertion, be so heavy to endure, what must it be to feel this inward banishment, this real estrangement from human commerce, and to be after this manner in a desert, and in the horridest of solitudes even when in the midst of society? What must it be to live in this disagreement with everything, this irreconcilableness and opposition to the order and government of the universe?

Hence it appears that the greatest of miseries accompanies that state which is consequent to the loss of natural affection; and that to have those horrid, monstrous, and unnatural affections is to be miserable in the highest degree.

CONCLUSION

Thus have we endeavoured to prove what was proposed in the beginning. And since in the common and known sense of vice and illness, no one can be vicious or ill except either, —

1. By the deficiency or weakness of natural affections;

Or, 2. By the violence of the selfish;

Or, 3. By such as are plainly unnatural:

It must follow that, if each of these is pernicious and destructive to the creature, insomuch that his completest state of misery is made from hence, to be wicked or vicious, is to be miserable and unhappy.

And since every vicious action must in proportion, more or less, help towards this mischief, and self-ill, it must follow that every vicious action must be self-injurious and ill.

On the other side, the happiness and good of virtue has been proved from the contrary effect of other affections, such as are according to nature and the economy of the species or kind. We have cast up all those particulars from whence (as by way of addition and subtraction) the main sum or general account of happiness is either augmented or diminished. And if there be no article exceptionable in this scheme of moral arithmetic, the subject treated may be said to have an evidence as great as that which is found in numbers or mathematics. For let us carry scepticism ever so far, let us doubt, if we can, of

everything about us, we cannot doubt of what passes within ourselves. Our passions and affections are known to us. They are certain, whatever the objects may be on which they are employed. Nor is it of any concern to our argument, how these exterior objects stand, whether they are realities or mere illusions; whether we wake or dream. For ill dreams will be equally disturbing; and a good dream (if life be nothing else) will be easily and happily passed. In this dream of life, therefore, our demonstrations have the same force, our balance and economy hold good, and our obligation to virtue is in every respect the same.

Upon the whole there is not, I presume, the least degree of certainty wanting in what has been said concerning the preferableness of the mental pleasures to the sensual; and even of the sensual, accompanied with good affection, and under a temperate and right use, to those which are no ways restrained, nor supported by any thing social or affectionate.

Nor is there less evidence in what has been said of the united structure and fabric of the mind, and of those passions which constitute the temper or soul, and on which its happiness or misery so immediately depend. It has been shown that in this constitution the impairing of any one part must instantly tend to the disorder and ruin of other parts and of the whole its lf, through the necessary connection and balance of the affections; that those very passions through which men are vicious are of themselves a torment and disease; and that whatsoever is done which is knowingly ill must be of ill consciousness; and in proportion as the act is ill must impair and corrupt social enjoyment, and destroy both the capacity of kind affection and the consciousness of meriting any such. So that neither can we participate thus in joy or happiness with others, or receive satisfaction from the mutual kindness or imagined love of others, on which, however, the greatest of all our pleasures are founded.

If this be the case of moral delinquency, and if the state which is consequent to this defection from nature be of all other the most horrid, oppressive, and miserable, 't will appear, "that to yield or consent to any thing ill or immoral is a breach of

interest, and leads to the greatest ills"; and, "that on the other side, every thing which is an improvement of virtue, or an establishment of right affection and integrity, is an advancement of interest, and leads to the greatest and most solid happiness and enjoyment."

Thus the wisdom of what rules, and is first and chief in nature, has made it to be according to the private interest and good of every one to work towards the general good, which if a creature ceases to promote, he is actually so far wanting to himself, and ceases to promote his own happiness and welfare. He is on this account directly his own enemy, nor can he any otherwise be good or useful to himself than as he continues good to society, and to that whole of which he is himself a part. So that virtue, which of all excellences and beauties is the chief and most amiable; that which is the prop and ornament of human affairs; which upholds communities, maintains union, friendship, and correspondence amongst men; that by which countries, as well as private families, flourish and are happy, and for want of which everything comely, conspicuous, great, and worthy, must perish and go to ruin; that single quality, thus beneficial to all society, and to mankind in general, is found equally a happiness and good to each creature in particular, and is that by which alone man can be happy, and without which he must be miserable.

And thus virtue is the good, and vice the ill of everyone.

BERNARD DE MANDEVILLE

(1670-1733)

AN ENQUIRY INTO THE ORIGIN OF MORAL VIRTUE*

All untaught animals are only solicitous of pleasing themselves, and naturally follow the bent of their own inclinations, without considering the good or harm that from their being pleased will accrue to others. This is the reason that, in the wild state of nature, those creatures are fittest to live peaceably together in great numbers, that discover the least of understanding, and have the fewest appetites to gratify; and consequently no species of animals is, without the curb of government, less capable of agreeing long together in multitudes than that of man; yet such are his qualities, whether good or bad, I shall not determine, that no creature besides himself can ever be made sociable: but, being an extraordinarily selfish and headstrong, as well as cunning animal, however he may be subdued by superior strength, it is impossible by force alone to make him tractable, and receive the improvements he is capable of.

The chief thing therefore, which lawgivers and other wise men, that have laboured for the establishment of society, have endeavoured, has been to make the people they were to govern believe, that it was more beneficial for every body to conquer than indulge his appetites, and much better to mind the public than what seemed his private interest. As this has always been a very difficult task, so no wit or eloquence has been left untried to compass it; and the moralists and philosophers of all ages employed their utmost skill to prove the truth of so useful an assertion. But, whether mankind would have ever believed it or not, it is not likely that any body could have persuaded them to disapprove of their natural inclinations, or prefer the good of others to their

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own, if at the same time he had not showed them an equivalent to be enjoyed as a reward for the violence which, by so doing, they of necessity must commit upon themselves. Those that have undertaken to civilize mankind were not ignorant of this; but being unable to give so many real rewards as would satisfy all persons for every individual action, they were forced to contrive an imaginary one, that, as a general equivalent for the trouble of self-denial, should serve on all occasions, and, without costing any thing either to themselves or others, be yet a most acceptable recompense to the receivers.

They thoroughly examined all the strength and frailties of our nature, and observing that none were either so savage as not to be charmed with praise, or so despicable as patiently to bear contempt, justly concluded, that flattery must be the most powerful argument that could be used to human creatures. Making use of this bewitching engine, they extolled the excellency of our nature above other animals; and, setting forth with unbounded praises the wonders of our sagacity and vastness of understanding, bestowed a thousand encomiums on the rationality of our souls, by the help of which we were capable of performing the most noble achievements. Having by this artful way of flattery insinuated themselves into the hearts of men, they began to instruct them in the notions of honour and shame, representing the one as the worst of all evils, and the other as the highest good to which mortals could aspire; which being done, they laid before them how unbecoming it was the dignity of such sublime creatures to be solicitous about gratifying those appetites which they had in common with brutes, and at the same time unmindful of those higher qualities that gave them the pre-eminence over all visible beings. They indeed confessed, that those impulses of nature were very pressing; that it was troublesome to resist, and very difficult wholly to subdue them. But this they only used as an argument to demonstrate, how glorious the conquest of them was on the one hand, and how scandalous on the other not to attempt it.

To introduce moreover an emulation amongst men, they divided the whole species in two classes, vastly differing from one another. The one consisted of abject, low-minded people, that,

always hunting after immediate enjoyment, were wholly incapable of self-denial, and, without regard to the good of others, had no higher aim than their private advantage, such as, being enslaved by voluptuousness, yielded without resistance to every gross desire, and made no use of their rational faculties but to heighten their sensual pleasures: these vile grovelling wretches, they said, were the dross of their kind, and, having only the shape of men, differed from brutes in nothing but their outward figure. But the other class was made up of lofty high-spirited creatures, that, free from sordid selfishness, esteemed the improvements of the mind to be their fairest possessions; and, setting a true value upon themselves, took no delight but in embellishing that part in which their excellency consisted, such as, despising whatever they had in common with irrational creatures, opposed by the help of reason their most violent inclinations, and making a continual war with themselves, to promote the peace of others, aimed at no less than the public welfare, and the conquest of their own passions.

> Fortior est qui se, quam qui fortissima vincit
> Moenia.

These they called the true representatives of their sublime species, exceeding in worth the first class by more degrees, than that itself was superior to the beasts of the field.

As in all animals that are not too imperfect to discover pride, we find that the finest, and such as are the most beautiful and valuable of their kind, have generally the greatest share of it; so in man, the most perfect of animals, it is so inseparable from his very essence (how cunningly soever some may learn to hide or disguise it), that without it the compound he is made of would want one of the chiefest ingredients; which, if we consider, it is hardly to be doubted but lessons and remonstrances, so skilfully adapted to the good opinion man has of himself, as those I have mentioned, must, if scattered amongst a multitude, not only gain the assent of most of them as to the speculative part, but likewise induce several, especially the fiercest, most resolute, and best among them, to endure a thousand inconveniencies, and undergo as many hardships, that they may have the pleasure of counting

themselves men of the second class, and consequently appropriating to themselves all the excellencies they have heard of it.

From what has been said we ought to expect, in the first place, that the heroes, who took such extraordinary pains to master some of their natural appetites, and preferred the good of others to any visible interest of their own, would not recede an inch from the fine notions they had received concerning the dignity of rational creatures; and, having ever the authority of the government on their side, with all imaginable vigour assert the esteem that was due to those of the second class, as well as their superiority over the rest of their kind. In the second, that those, who wanting a sufficient stock of either pride or resolution to buoy them up in mortifying of what was dearest to them, followed the sensual dictates of nature, would yet be ashamed of confessing themselves to be of those despicable wretches that belonged to the inferior class and were generally reckoned to be so little removed from brutes; and that therefore in their own defence they would say as others did, and, hiding their own imperfections as well as they could, cry up self-denial and public-spiritedness as much as any; for it is highly probable, that some of them, convinced by the real proofs of fortitude and self-conquest they had seen, would admire in others what they found wanting in themselves; others, be afraid of the resolution and prowess of those of the second class, and that all of them were kept in awe by the power of their rulers; wherefore it is reasonable to think, that none of them (whatever they thought in themselves) would dare openly contradict what by everybody else was thought criminal to doubt of.

This was (or at least might have been) the manner after which savage man was broke; from whence it is evident, that the first rudiments of morality, broached by skilful politicians, to render men useful to each other as well as tractable, were chiefly contrived that the ambitious might reap the more benefit from and govern vast numbers of them with the greatest ease and security. This foundation of politics being once laid, it is impossible that man should long remain uncivilized; for even those, who only strove to gratify their appetites, being continually crossed by others of the same stamp, could not but observe, that whenever

they checked their inclinations, or but followed them with more circumspection, they avoided a world of troubles, and often escaped many of the calamities that generally attended the too eager pursuit after pleasure.

First, they received, as well as others, the benefit of those actions that were done for the good of the whole society, and consequently could not forbear wishing well to those of the superior class that performed them. Secondly, the more intent they were in seeking their own advantage without regard to others, the more they were hourly convinced, that none stood so much in their way as those that were most like themselves.

It being the interest then of the very worst of them, more than any, to preach up public-spiritedness, that they might reap the fruits of the labour and self-denial of others, and at the same time indulge their own appetites with less disturbance, they agreed with the rest to call every thing which, without regard to the public, man should commit to gratify any of his appetites, VICE, if in that action there could be observed the least prospect, that it might either be injurious to any of the society, or even render himself less serviceable to others, and to give the name of VIRTUE to every performance, by which man, contrary to the impulse of nature, should endeavour the benefit of others, or the conquest of his own passions, out of a rational ambition of being good.

It shall be objected, that no society was ever any ways civilized, before the major part had agreed upon some worship or other of an over-ruling power, and consequently that the notions of good and evil, and the distinction between virtue and vice, were never the contrivance of politicians, but the pure effect of religion. Before I answer this objection, I must repeat what I have said already, that in this *Enquiry into the origin of moral virtue*, I speak neither of Jews nor Christians, but man in his state of nature and ignorance of the true Deity; and then I affirm, that the idolatrous superstitions of all other nations, and the pitiful notions they had of the Supreme Being, were incapable of exciting man to virtue, and good for nothing but to awe and amuse a rude and unthinking multitude. It is evident from history, that in all considerable

societies, how stupid or ridiculous soever peoples' received notions have been as to the deities they worshipped, human nature has ever exerted itself in all its branches, and that there is no earthly wisdom or moral virtue, but at one time or other men have excelled in it in all monarchies and commonwealths, that for riches and power have been any ways remarkable.

The Egyptians, not satisfied with having deified all the ugly monsters they could think on, were so silly as to adore the onions of their own sowing; yet at the same time their country was the most famous nursery of arts and sciences in the world, and themselves more eminently skilled in the deepest mysteries of nature than any nation has been since.

No states or kingdoms under heaven have yielded more or greater patterns in all sorts of moral virtues than the Greek and Roman empires, more especially the latter; and yet how loose, absurd, and ridiculous were their sentiments as to sacred matters? for without reflecting on the extravagant number of their deities, if we only consider the infamous stories they fathered upon them, it is not to be denied but that their religion, far from teaching men the conquest of their passions, and the way to virtue, seemed rather contrived to justify their appetites, and encourage their vices. But, if we would know what made them excel in fortitude, courage, and magnanimity, we must cast our eyes on the pomp of their triumphs, the magnificence of their monuments and arches, their trophies, statues, and inscriptions, the variety of their military crowns, their honours decreed to the dead, public encomiums on the living, and other imaginary rewards they bestowed on men of merit: and we shall find, that what carried so many of them to the utmost pitch of self-denial, was nothing but their policy in making use of the most effectual means that human pride could be flattered with.

It is visible then, that it was not any heathen religion or other idolatrous superstition, that first put man upon crossing his appetites and subduing his dearest inclinations, but the skilful management of wary politicians; and the nearer we search into human nature, the more we shall be convinced, that the moral virtues are the political offspring which flattery begot upon pride.

There is no man of what capacity or penetration soever, that is wholly proof against the witchcraft of flattery, if artfully performed, and suited to his abilities. Children and fools will swallow personal praise, but those that are more cunning must be managed with greater circumspection; and the more general the flattery is, the less it is suspected by those it is levelled at. What you say in commendation of a whole town is received with pleasure by all the inhabitants: speak in commendation of letters in general, and every man of learning will think himself in particular obliged to you. You may safely praise the employment a man is of, or the country he was born in, because you give him an opportunity of screening the joy he feels upon his own account, under the esteem which he pretends to have for others.

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But here I shall be told, that, besides the noisy toils of war and public bustle of the ambitious, there are noble and generous actions that are performed in silence; that virtue being its own reward, those who are really good have a satisfaction in their consciousness of being so, which is all the recompense they expect from the most worthy performances; that among the heathens there have been men, who, when they did good to others, were so far from coveting thanks and applause, that they took all imaginable care to be for ever concealed from those on whom they bestowed their benefit, and consequently that pride has no hand in spurring man on to the highest pitch of self-denial.

In answer to this I say, that it is impossible to judge of a man's performance, unless we are thoroughly acquainted with the principle and motive from which he acts. Pity, though it is the most gentle and the least mischievous of all our passions, is yet as much a frailty of our nature, as anger, pride, or fear. The weakest minds have generally the greatest share of it, for which reason none are more compassionate than women and children. It must be owned, that of all our weaknesses it is the most amiable, and bears the greatest resemblance to virtue; nay, without a considerable mixture of it, the society could hardly subsist; but, as it is an impulse of nature, that consults neither the public interest nor our own reason, it may produce evil as well as good.

It has helped to destroy the honour of virgins, and corrupted the integrity of judges; and whoever acts from it as a principle, what good soever he may bring to the society, has nothing to boast of but that he has indulged a passion that has happened to be beneficial to the public. There is no merit in saving an innocent babe ready to drop into the fire; the action is neither good nor bad, and what benefit soever the infant received, we only obliged ourselves; for to have seen it fall, and not striven to hinder it, would have caused a pain, which self-preservation compelled us to prevent: nor has a rich prodigal, that happens to be of a commiserating temper, and loves to gratify his passions, greater virtue to boast of, when he relieves an object of compassion with what to himself is a trifle.

But such men as, without complying with any weakness of their own, can part from what they value themselves, and, from no other motive but their love to goodness, perform a worthy action in silence; such men, I confess, have acquired more refined notions of virtue than those I have hitherto spoke of; yet even in these (with which the world has yet never swarm'd) we may discover no small symptoms of pride, and the humblest man alive must confess, that the reward of a virtuous action, which is the satisfaction that ensues upon it, consists in a certain pleasure he procures to himself by contemplating on his own worth: which pleasure, together with the occasion of it, are as certain signs of pride, as looking pale and trembling at any imminent danger are the symptoms of fear.

If the too scrupulous reader should at first view condemn these notions concerning the origin of moral virtue, and think them perhaps offensive to Christianity, I hope he'll forbear his censures, when he shall consider, that nothing can render the unsearchable depth of the divine wisdom more conspicuous, than that man, whom providence had designed for society, should not only by his own frailties and imperfections be led into the road to temporal happiness, but likewise receive from a seeming necessity of natural causes, a tincture of that knowledge in which he was afterwards to be made perfect by the true religion, to his eternal welfare.

WILLIAM WOLLASTON
(1660-1724)

THE RELIGION OF NATURE DELINEATED*

SECTION I. OF MORAL GOOD AND EVIL

The foundation of religion lies in that difference between the acts of men, which distinguishes them into good, evil, indifferent. For if there is such a difference, there must be religion; and contra. Upon this account it is that such a long and laborious inquiry hath been made after some general idea, or some rule, by comparing the foresaid acts with which it might appear, to which kind they respectively belong. And though men have not yet agreed upon any one, yet one certainly there must be. That, which I am going to propose, has always seemed to me not only evidently true, but withal so obvious and plain, that perhaps for this very reason it hath not merited the notice of authors: and the use and application of it is so easy, that if things are but fairly permitted to speak for themselves their own natural language, they will, with a moderate attention, be found themselves to proclaim their own rectitude or obliquity; that is, whether they are disagreeable to it, or not. I shall endeavour by degrees to explain my meaning.

I. That act, which may be denominated morally good or evil, must be the act of a being capable of distinguishing, choosing, and acting for himself: or more briefly, of an intelligent and free agent. Because in proper speaking no act at all can be ascribed to that, which is not indued with these capacities. For that, which cannot distinguish, cannot choose: and that, which has not the opportunity, or liberty of choosing for itself, and acting accordingly, from an internal principle, acts, if it acts at all, under a necessity incumbent *ab extra*. But that, which acts thus,

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is in reality only an instrument in the hand of something which imposes the necessity; and cannot properly be said to act, but to be acted on. The act must be the act of an agent: therefore not of his instrument.

A being under the above-mentioned inabilities is, as to the morality of its acts, in the state of inert and passive matter, and can be but a machine: to which no language or philosophy ever ascribed ἤθη or *mores*.

II. Those propositions are true, which express things as they are: or, truth is the conformity of those words or signs, by which things are exprest, to the things themselves. Defin.

III. A true proposition may be denied, or things may be denied to be what they are, by deeds, as well as by express words or another proposition. It is certain there is a meaning in many acts and gestures. Everybody understands weeping, laughing, shrugs, frowns, etc., these are a sort of universal language.

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But these instances do not come up to my meaning. There are many acts of other kinds, such as constitute the character of a man's conduct in life, which have in nature, and would be taken by any indifferent judge to have a signification, and to imply some proposition, as plainly to be understood as if it was declared in words: and therefore if what such acts declare to be, is not, they must contradict truth, as much as any false proposition or assertion can.

If a body of soldiers, seeing another body approach, should fire upon them, would not this action declare that they were enemies; and if they were not enemies, would not this military language declare what was false? No, perhaps it may be said; this can only be called a mistake, like that which happened to the Athenians in the attack of Epipolæ, or to the Carthaginians in their last encampment against Agathocles in Africa. Suppose then, instead of this firing, some officer to have said they were enemies, when indeed they were friends: would not that sentence affirming them to be enemies be false, notwithstanding he who spoke it was mistaken? The truth or falsehood of this affirmation doth not depend upon the affirmer's knowledge or ignorance:

because there is a certain sense affixt to the words, which must either agree or disagree to that, concerning which the affirmation is made. The thing is the very same still, if into the place of words be substituted actions. The salute here was in nature the salute of an enemy, but should have been the salute of a friend: therefore it implied a falsity. Any spectator would have understood this action as I do; for a declaration, that the other were enemies. Now what is to be understood, has a meaning: and what has a meaning, may be either true or false: which is as much as can be said of any verbal sentence.

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I lay this down then as a fundamental maxim, That whoever acts as if things were so, or not so, doth by his acts declare, that they are so, or not so; as plainly as he could by words, and with more reality. And if the things are otherwise, his acts contradict those propositions, which assert them to be as they are.

IV. No act (whether word or deed) of any being, to whom moral good and evil are imputable, that interferes with any true proposition, or denies any thing to be as it is, can be right. For,

1. If that proposition, which is false, be wrong, that act which implies such a proposition, or is founded in it, cannot be right: because it is the very proposition itself in practice.

2. Those propositions, which are true, and express things as they are, express the relation between the subject and the attribute as it is; that is, this is either affirmed or denied of that according to the nature of that relation. And further, this relation (or, if you will, the nature of this relation) is determined and fixt by the natures of the things themselves. Therefore nothing can interfere with any proposition that is true, but it must likewise interfere with nature (the nature of the relation, and the natures of the things themselves too), and consequently be unnatural, or wrong in nature. So very much are those gentlemen mistaken, who by following nature mean only complying with their bodily inclinations, though in opposition to truth, or at least without any regard to it. Truth is but a conformity to nature: and to follow nature cannot be to combat truth.

3. If there is a supreme being, upon whom the existence of the

world depends; and nothing can be in it but what He either causes, or permits to be; then to own things to be as they are is to own what He causes, or at least permits, to be thus caused or permitted: and this is to take things as He gives them, to go into His constitution of the world, and to submit to His will, revealed in the books of nature. To do this therefore must be agreeable to His will. And if so, the contrary must be disagreeable to it; and, since (as we shall find in due time) there is a perfect rectitude in His will, certainly wrong.

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Lastly, To deny things to be as they are is a transgression of the great law of our nature, the law of reason. For truth cannot be opposed, but reason must be violated. But of this more in the proper place.

Much might be added here concerning the amiable nature, and great force of truth. If I may judge by what I feel within myself, the least truth cannot be contradicted without much reluctance: even to see other men disregard it does something more than displease; it is shocking.

V. What has been said of acts inconsistent with truth, may also be said of many omissions, or neglects to act: that is, by these also true propositions may be denied to be true; and then those omissions, by which this is done, must be wrong for the same reasons with those assigned under the former proposition.

Nothing can be asserted or denied by any act with regard to those things, to which it bears no relation: and here no truth can be affected. And when acts do bear such relations to other things, as to be declaratory of something concerning them, this commonly is visible; and it is not difficult to determine, whether truth suffers by them, or not. Some things cannot possibly be done, but truth must be directly and positively denied; and the thing will be clear. But the cases arising from omissions are not always so well determined, and plain: it is not always easy to know when or how far truth is violated by omitting. Here therefore more latitude must be allowd, and much must be left to every one's own judgment and ingenuity.

This may be said in general, that when any truth would be

denied by acting, the omitting to act can deny no truth. For no truth can be contrary to truth. And there may be omissions in other cases, that are silent as to truth. But yet there are some neglects or refusals to act, which are manifestly inconsistent with it (or, with some true propositions).

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VI. In order to judge rightly what anything is, it must be considered not only what it is in itself or in one respect, but also what it may be in any other respect, which is capable of being denied by facts or practice: and the whole description of the thing ought to be taken in.

If a man steals a horse, and rides away upon him, he may be said indeed by riding him to use him as a horse, but not as the horse of another man, who gave him no licence to do this. He does not therefore consider him as being what he is, unless he takes in the respect he bears to his true owner. But it is not necessary perhaps to consider what he is in respect to his color, shape, or age: because the thief's riding away with him may neither affirm nor deny him to be of any particular color, etc. I say therefore, that those, and all those properties, respects, and circumstances, which may be contradicted by practice, are to be taken into consideration. For otherwise the thing to be considered is but imperfectly surveyed; and the whole compass of it being not taken in, it is taken not as being what it is, but as what it is in part only, and in other respects perhaps as being what it is not.

If a rich man being upon a journey, should be robbed and stripped, it would be a second robbery and injustice committed upon him to take from him part of his then character, and to consider him only as a rich man. His character completed is a rich man robbed and abused, and indeed at that time a poor man and distrest, though able to repay afterwards the assistance lent him.

In short, when things are truly estimated, persons concerned, times, places, ends intended, and effects that naturally follow, must be added to them.

VII. When any act would be wrong, the forbearing that act must be right: likewise when the omission of anything would be

wrong, the doing of it (*i. e.* not omitting it) must be right. Because *contrariorum contraria est ratio.*

VIII. Moral good and evil are coincident with right and wrong. For that cannot be good, which is wrong; nor that evil, which is right.

IX. Every act therefore of such a being, as is before described, and all those omissions which interfere with truth (*i. e.* deny any proposition to be true, which is true; or suppose any thing not to be what it is, in any regard) are morally evil, in some degree or other: the forbearing such acts, and the acting in opposition to such omissions are morally good: and when any thing may be either done, or not done, equally without the violation of truth, that thing is indifferent.

But let us return to that, which is our main subject, the distinction between moral good and evil. Some have been so wild as to deny there is any such thing: but from what has been said here, it is manifest, that there is as certainly moral good and evil as there is true and false; and that there is as natural and immutable a difference between those as between these, the difference at the bottom being indeed the same. Others acknowledge, that there is indeed moral good and evil; but they want some criterion, or mark, by the help of which they might know them asunder. And others there are, who pretend to have found that rule, by which our actions ought to be squared, and may be discriminated; or that ultimate end, to which they ought all to be referred: but what they have advanced is either false, or not sufficiently guarded, or not comprehensive enough, or not clear and firm, or (so far as it is just) reducible to my rule. For they, who reckon nothing to be good but what they call *honestum* may denominate actions according as that is, or is not the cause or end of them: but then what is *honestum?* Something is still wanting to measure things by, and to separate the *honesta* from the *inhonesta.*

They who place all in following nature, if they mean by that phrase acting according to the natures of things (that is, treating things as being what they in nature are, or according to truth) say what is right. But this does not seem to be their meaning.

And if it is only that a man must follow his own nature, since his nature is not purely rational, but there is a part of him, which he has in common with brutes, they appoint him a guide which I fear will mislead him, this being commonly more likely to prevail, than the rational part. At best this talk is loose.

They who make right reason to be the law, by which our acts are to be judged, and according to their conformity to this or deflexion from it call them lawful or unlawful, good or bad, say something more particular and precise. And indeed it is true, that whatever will bear to be tried by right reason, is right; and that which is condemned by it, wrong. And moreover, if by right reason is meant that which is found by the right use of our rational faculties, this is the same with truth: and what is said by them, will be comprehended in what I have said. But the manner in which they have delivered themselves, is not yet explicit enough. It leaves room for so many disputes and opposite right-reasons, that nothing can be settled, while every one pretends that his reason is right. And beside, what I have said, extends farther: for we are not only to respect those truths, which we discover by reasoning, but even such matters of fact, as are fairly discovered to us by our senses. We ought to regard things as being what they are, which way soever we come to the knowledge of them.

They, who contenting themselves with superficial and transient views, deduce the difference between good and evil from the common sense of mankind, and certain principles that are born with us, put the matter upon a very infirm foot. For it is much to be suspected there are no such innate maxims as they pretend, but that the impressions of education are mistaken for them: and beside that, the sentiments of mankind are not so uniform and constant, as that we may safely trust such an important distinction upon them.

They, who own nothing to be good but pleasure, or what they call *jucundum*, nothing evil but pain, and distinguish things by their tendencies to this or that, do not agree in what this pleasure is to be placed, or by what methods and actings the most of it may be obtained. These are left to be questions still. As men have different tastes, different degrees of sense and philosophy,

the same thing cannot be pleasant to all: and if particular actions are to be proved by this test, the morality of them will be very uncertain; the same act may be of one nature to one man, and of another to another. Beside, unless there be some strong limitation added as a fence for virtue, men will be apt to sink into gross voluptuousness, as in fact the generality of Epicurus' herd have done (notwithstanding all his talk of temperance, virtue, tranquillity of mind, etc.); and the bridle will be usurped by those appetites which it is a principal part of all religion, natural as well as any other, to curb and restrain. So these men say what is intelligible indeed: but what they say is false. For not all pleasures, but only such pleasure as is true, or happiness (of which afterwards), may be reckoned among the *fines*, or *ultima bonorum*.

He, who, having considered the two extremes in men's practice, in condemning both which the world generally agrees, places virtue in the middle, and seems to raise an idea of it from its situation at an equal distance from the opposite extremes, could only design to be understood of such virtues, as have extremes. It must be granted indeed, that whatever declines in any degree toward either extreme, must be so far wrong or evil; and therefore that, which equally (or nearly) divides the distance, and declines neither way, must be right: also, that his notion supplies us with a good direction for common use in many cases. But then there are several obligations, that can by no means be derived from it: scarce more than such, as respect the virtues couched under the word moderation. And even as to these, it is many times difficult to discern, which is the middle point. This the author himself was sensible of.

And when his master Plato makes virtue to consist in such a likeness to God, as we are capable of (and God to be the great exemplar), he says what I shall not dispute. But since he tells us not how or by what means we may attain this likeness, we are little the wiser in point of practice: unless by it we understand the practice of truth, God being truth, and doing nothing contrary to it.

Whether any of those other foundations, upon which morality

has been built, will hold better than these mentioned, I much question. But if the formal ratio of moral good and evil be made to consist in a conformity of men's acts to the truth of the case or the contrary, as I have here explained it, the distinction seems to be settled in a manner undeniable, intelligible, practicable. For as what is meant by a true proposition and matter of fact is perfectly understood by everybody; so will it be easy for any one, so far as he knows any such propositions and facts, to compare not only words, but also actions with them. A very little skill and attention will serve to interpret even these, and discover whether they speak truth, or not.

X. If there be moral good and evil, distinguished as before, there is religion; and such as may most properly be styled natural. By religion I mean nothing else but an obligation to do (under which word I comprehend acts both of body and mind. I say, to do) what ought not to be omitted, and to forbear what ought not to be done. So that there must be religion, if there are things, of which some ought not to be done, some not to be omitted. But that there are such, appears from what has been said concerning moral good and evil: because that, which to omit would be evil, and which therefore being done would be good or well done, ought certainly by the terms to be done; and so that, which being done would be evil, and implies such absurdities and rebellion against the supreme being, as are mentioned under proposition the IVth, ought most undoubtedly not to be done. And then since there is religion, which follows from the distinction between moral good and evil; since this distinction is founded in the respect, which men's acts bear to truth; and since no proposition can be true, which expresses things otherwise than as they are in nature: since things are so, there must be religion, which is founded in nature, and may upon that account be most properly and truly called the religion of nature or natural religion; the great law of which religion, the law of nature, or rather (as we shall afterwards find reason to call it) of the Author of nature is,

XI. That every intelligent, active, and free being should so behave himself, as by no act to contradict truth; or, that he should treat every thing as being what it is. . . .

SECTION II. OF HAPPINESS

That, which demands to be next considered, is happiness; as being in itself most considerable; as abetting the cause of truth; and as being indeed so nearly allied to it, that they cannot well be parted. We cannot pay the respects due to one, unless we regard the other. Happiness must not be denied to be what it is: and it is by the practice of truth that we aim at that happiness, which is true.

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II. Pain considered in itself is a real evil, pleasure a real good. I take this as a postulatum, that will without difficulty be granted. Therefore,

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V. When pleasures and pains are equal, they mutually destroy each other: when the one exceeds, the excess gives the true quantity of pleasure or pain. For nine degrees of pleasure, less by nine degrees of pain, are equal to nothing: but nine degrees of one, less by three degrees of the other, give six of the former net and true.

VI. As therefore there may be true pleasure and pain: so there may be some pleasures, which compared with what attends or follows them, not only may vanish into nothing, but may even degenerate into pain, and ought to be reckoned as pains; and *v. v.* some pains, that may be annumerated to pleasures. For the true quantity of pleasure differs not from that quantity of true pleasure; or it is so much of that kind of pleasure, which is true (clear of all discounts and future payments): nor can the true quantity of pain not be the same with that quantity of truth or mere pain.

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VIII. That being may be said to be ultimately happy, in some degree or other, the sum total of whose pleasures exceeds the sum of all his pains: or, ultimate happiness is the sum of happiness, or true pleasure, at the foot of the account. And so on the other side, that being may be said to be ultimately un-

happy, the sum of all whose pains exceeds that of all his pleasures.

IX. To make itself happy is a duty, which every being, in proportion to its capacity, owes to itself; and that, which every intelligent being may be supposed to aim at, in general. For happiness is some quantity of true pleasure: and that pleasure, which I call true, may be considered by itself, and so will be justly desirable (according to prop. II. and III.). On the contrary, unhappiness is certainly to be avoided: because being a quantity of mere pain, it may be considered by itself, as a real, mere evil, etc. and because if I am obliged to pursue happiness, I am at the same time obliged to recede, as far as I can, from its contrary. All this is self-evident. And hence it follows, that,

X. We cannot act with respect to either ourselves, or other men, as being what we and they are, unless both are considered as beings susceptive of happiness and unhappiness, and naturally desirous of the one and averse to the other. Other animals may be considered after the same manner in proportion to their several degrees of apprehension.

But that the nature of happiness, and the road to it, which is so very apt to be mistaken, may be better understood; and true pleasures more certainly distinguished from false; the following propositions must still be added.

XI. As the true and ultimate happiness of no being can be produced by any thing, that interferes with truth, and denies the natures of things: so neither can the practice of truth make any being ultimately unhappy. For that, which contradicts nature and truth, opposes the will of the Author of nature, and to suppose, that an inferior being may in opposition to His will break through the constitution of things, and by so doing make himself happy, is to suppose that being more potent than the Author of nature, and consequently more potent than the author of the nature and power of that very being himself, which is absurd. And as to the other part of the proposition, it is also absurd to think, that, by the constitution of nature and will of its author, any being should be finally miserable only for conforming himself to truth, and owning things and the relations

lying between them to be what they are. It is much the same as to say, God has made it natural to contradict nature; or unnatural, and therefore punishable, to act according to nature and reality. If such a blunder (excuse the boldness of the word) could be, it must come either through a defect of power in Him to cause a better and more equitable scheme, or from some delight, which he finds in the misery of his dependents. The former cannot be ascribed to the First cause, who is the fountain of power: nor the latter to Him, who gives so many proofs of his goodness and beneficence. Many beings may be said to be happy; and there are none of us all, who have not many enjoyments: whereas did he delight in the infelicity of those beings, which depend upon Him, it must be natural to Him to make them unhappy, and then not one of them would be otherwise in any respect. The world in that case instead of being such a beautiful, admirable system, in which there is only a mixture of evils, could have been only a scene of mere misery, horror, and torment.

That either the enemies of truth (wicked men) should be ultimately happy, or the religious observers of it (good men) ultimately unhappy, is such injustice, and an evil so great, that sure no Manichean will allow such a superiority of his evil principle over the good, as is requisite to produce and maintain it.

XII. The genuine happiness of every being must be something, that is not incompatible with or destructive of its nature, or the superior or better part of it, if it be mixed. For instance, nothing can be the true happiness of a rational being, that is inconsistent with reason. For all pleasure, and therefore be sure all clear pleasure and true happiness must be something agreeable (pr. I.): and nothing can be agreeable to a reasoning nature, or (which is the same) to the reason of that nature, which is repugnant and disagreeable to reason. If any thing becomes agreeable to a rational being, which is not agreeable to reason, it is plain his reason is lost, his nature depressed, and that he now lifts himself among irrationals, at least as to that particular. If a being finds pleasure in any thing unreasonable, he has an unreasonable pleasure; but a rational nature can like nothing of

that kind without a contradiction to itself. For to do this would be to act, as if it was the contrary to what it is. Lastly, if we find hereafter, that whatever interferes with reason, interferes with truth, and to contradict either of them is the same thing; then what has been said under the former proposition, does also confirm this: as what has been said in proof of this, does also confirm the former.

XIII. Those pleasures are true, and to be reckoned into our happiness, against which there lies no reason. For when there is no reason against any pleasure, there is always one for it, included in the term. So when there is no reason for undergoing pain (or venturing it), there is one against it.

Obs. There is therefore no necessity for men to torture their inventions in finding out arguments to justify themselves in the pursuits after worldly advantages and enjoyments, provided that neither these enjoyments, nor the means by which they are attained, contain the violation of any truth, by being unjust, immoderate, or the like. For in this case there is no reason why we should not desire them, and a direct one, why we should; viz. because they are enjoyments.

XIV. To conclude this section, the way to happiness and the practice of truth incur the one into the other. For no being can be styled happy, that is not ultimately so: because if all his pains exceed all his pleasures, he is so far from being happy, that he is a being unhappy or miserable, in proportion to that excess. Now by prop. XI. nothing can produce the ultimate happiness of any being, which interferes with truth: and therefore whatever doth produce that, must be something which is consistent and coincident with this.

Two things then (but such as are met together, and embrace each other), which are to be religiously regarded in all our conduct, are truth (of which in the preceding section) and happiness (that is, such pleasures, as company, or follow the practice of truth, or are not inconsistent with it: of which I have been treating in this). And as that religion, which arises from the distinction between moral good and evil, was called natural, because grounded upon truth and the natures of things: so perhaps may

that too, which proposes happiness for its end, in as much as it proceeds upon that difference, which there is between true pleasure and pain, which are physical (or natural) good and evil. And since both these unite so amicably, and are at last the same, here is one religion which may be called natural upon two accounts.

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JOSEPH BUTLER

(1692–1752)

SERMONS*

PREFACE

THERE are two ways in which the subject of morals may be treated. One begins from inquiring into the abstract relations of things; the other from matter of fact, namely, what the particular nature of man is, its several parts, their economy or constitution; from whence it proceeds to determine what course of life it is, which is correspondent to this whole nature. In the former method the conclusion is expressed thus, that vice is contrary to the nature and reason of things; in the latter, that it is a violation or breaking in upon our own nature. Thus they both lead us to the same thing, our obligations to the practice of virtue; and thus they exceedingly strengthen and enforce each other. The first seems the most direct formal proof, and in some respects the least liable to cavil and dispute; the latter is in a peculiar manner adapted to satisfy a fair mind, and is more easily applicable to the several particular relations and circumstances in life.

The following Discourses proceed chiefly in this latter method. The first three wholly. They were intended to explain what is meant by the nature of man, when it is said that virtue consists in following, and vice in deviating from it; and by explaining to show that the assertion is true. . . .

SERMON I. UPON THE SOCIAL NATURE OF MAN

For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: so we being many are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. — Rom. xii. 4, 5.

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The relation which the several parts or members of the natural body have to each other and to the whole body, is here compared to the relation which each particular person in society has to

* From Joseph Butler's *Fifteen Sermons upon Human Nature*, London, 1726; 2 ed., 1729.

other particular persons and to the whole society; and the latter is intended to be illustrated by the former. And if there be a likeness between these two relations, the consequence is obvious: that the latter shows us we were intended to do good to others, as the former shows us that the several members of the natural body were intended to be instruments of good to each other and to the whole body. But as there is scarce any ground for a comparison between society and the mere material body, this without the mind being a dead unactive thing; much less can the comparison be carried to any length. And since the apostle speaks of the several members as having distinct offices, which implies the mind; it cannot be thought an unallowable liberty; instead of the *body* and *its members*, to substitute the *whole nature of man*, and *all the variety of internal principles which belong to it.* And then the comparison will be between the nature of man as respecting self, and tending to private good, his own preservation and happiness; and the nature of man as having respect to society, and tending to promote public good, the happiness of that society. These ends do indeed perfectly coincide; and to aim at public and private good are so far from being inconsistent, that they mutually promote each other: yet in the following discourse they must be considered as entirely distinct; otherwise the nature of man as tending to one, or as tending to the other cannot be compared. There can no comparison be made, without considering the things compared as distinct and different.

From this review and comparison of the nature of man as respecting self, and as respecting society, it will plainly appear, that *there are as real and the same kind of indications in human nature, that we were made for society and to do good to our fellow-creatures, as that we were intended to take care of our own life and health and private good: and that the same objections lie against one of these assertions, as against the other.* For,

First, there is a natural principle of *benevolence* in man; which is in some degree to *society*, what *self-love* is to the *individual.* And if there be in mankind any disposition to friendship; if there be any such thing as compassion, for compassion is momentary love; if there be any such thing as the paternal or filial affections;

if there be any affection in human nature, the object and end of which is the good of another, this is itself benevolence, or the love of another. Be it ever so short, be it in ever so low a degree, or ever so unhappily confined; it proves the assertion, and points out what we were designed for, as really as though it were in a higher degree and more extensive. I must, however, remind you that though benevolence and self-love are different; though the former tends most directly to public good, and the latter to private: yet they are so perfectly coincident that the greatest satisfactions to ourselves depend upon our having benevolence in a due degree; and that self-love is one chief security of our right behaviour towards society. It may be added, that their mutual coinciding, so that we can scarce promote one without the other, is equally a proof that we were made for both.

Secondly, This will further appear, from observing that the *several passions* and *affections*, which are distinct both from benevolence and self-love, do in general contribute and lead us to *public* good as really as to *private*. It might be thought too minute and particular, and would carry us too great a length, to distinguish between and compare together the several passions or appetites distinct from benevolence, whose primary use and intention is the security and good of society; and the passions distinct from self-love, whose primary intention and design is the security and good of the individual. It is enough to the present argument, that desire of esteem from others, contempt and esteem of them, love of society as distinct from affection to the good of it, indignation against successful vice, that these are public affections or passions; have an immediate respect to others, naturally lead us to regulate our behaviour in such a manner as will be of service to our fellow-creatures. If any or all of these may be considered likewise as private affections, as tending to private good; this does not hinder them from being public affections too, or destroy the good influence of them upon society, and their tendency to public good. It may be added, that as persons without any conviction from reason of the desirableness of life, would yet of course preserve it merely from the appetite of hunger; so by acting merely from regard (suppose) to reputation, without

any consideration of the good of others, men often contribute to public good. In both these instances they are plainly instruments in the hands of another, in the hands of Providence, to carry on ends, the preservation of the individual and good of society, which they themselves have not in their view or intention. The sum is, men have various appetites, passions, and particular affections, quite distinct both from self-love and from benevolence: all of these have a tendency to promote both public and private good, and may be considered as respecting others and ourselves equally and in common: but some of them seem most immediately to respect others, or tend to public good; others of them most immediately to respect self, or tend to private good: as the former are not benevolence, so the latter are not self-love: neither sort are instances of our love either to ourselves or others; but only instances of our Maker's care and love both of the individual and the species, and proofs that he intended we should be instruments of good to each other, as well as that we should be so to ourselves.

Thirdly, There is a principle of reflection in men, by which they distinguish between, approve, and disapprove their own actions. We are plainly constituted such sort of creatures as to reflect upon our own nature. The mind can take a view of what passes within itself, its propensions, aversions, passions, affections, as respecting such objects, and in such degrees; and of the several actions consequent thereupon. In this survey it approves of one, disapproves of another, and towards a third is affected in neither of these ways, but is quite indifferent. This principle in man, by which he approves or disapproves his heart, temper, and actions, is conscience; for this is the strict sense of the word, though sometimes it is used so as to take in more. And that this faculty tends to restrain men from doing mischief to each other, and leads them to do good, is too manifest to need being insisted upon. Thus a parent has the affection of love to his children: this leads him to take care of, to educate, to make due provision for them: the natural affection leads to this; but the reflection that it is his proper business, what belongs to him,

that it is right and commendable so to do; this added to the affection becomes a much more settled principle, and carries him on through more labour and difficulties for the sake of his children, than he would undergo from that affection alone, if he thought it, and the course of action it led to, either indifferent or criminal. This indeed is impossible, to do that which is good and not to approve of it; for which reason they are frequently not considered as distinct, though they really are; for men often approve of the actions of others, which they will not imitate, and likewise do that which they approve not. It cannot possibly be denied that there is this principle of reflection or conscience in human nature. Suppose a man to relieve an innocent person in great distress; suppose the same man afterwards, in the fury of anger, to do the greatest mischief to a person who had given no just cause of offence; to aggravate the injury, add the circumstances of former friendship, and obligation from the injured person; let the man who is supposed to have done these two different actions, coolly reflect upon them afterwards, without regard to their consequences to himself: to assert that any common man would be affected in the same way towards these different actions, that he would make no distinction between them, but approve or disapprove them equally, is too glaring a falsity to need being confuted. There is therefore this principle of reflection or conscience in mankind. It is needless to compare the respect it has to private good, with the respect it has to public; since it plainly tends as much to the latter as to the former, and is commonly thought to tend chiefly to the latter. This faculty is now mentioned merely as another part in the inward frame of man, pointing out to us in some degree what we are intended for, and as what will naturally and of course have some influence. The particular place assigned to it by nature, what authority it has, and how great influence it ought to have, shall be hereafter considered.

From this comparison of benevolence and self-love, of our public and private affections, of the courses of life they lead to, and of the principle of reflection or conscience as respecting each

of them, it is as manifest, that *we were made for society, and to promote the happiness of it, as that we were intended to take care of our own life, and health, and private good.*

And from this whole review must be given a different draught of human nature from what we are often presented with. Mankind are by nature so closely united, there is such a correspondence between the inward sensations of one man and those of another, that disgrace is as much avoided as bodily pain, and to be the object of esteem and love as much desired as any external goods: and in many particular cases persons are carried on to do good to others, as the end their affection tends to and rests in; and manifest that they find real satisfaction and enjoyment in this course of behaviour. There is such a natural principle of attraction in man towards man, that having trod the same tract of land, having breathed in the same climate, barely having been born in the same artificial district or division, becomes the occasion of contracting acquaintances and familiarities many years after: for anything may serve the purpose. Thus relations merely nominal are sought and invented, not by governors, but by the lowest of the people, which are found sufficient to hold mankind together in little fraternities and copartnerships; weak ties indeed, and what may afford fund enough for ridicule, if they are absurdly considered as the real principles of that union; but they are in truth merely the occasions, as anything may be of anything upon which our nature carries us on according to its own previous bent and bias; which occasions therefore would be nothing at all, were there not this prior disposition and bias of nature. Men are so much one body, that in a peculiar manner they feel for each other shame, sudden danger, resentment, honour, prosperity, distress; one or another, or all of these, from the social nature in general, from benevolence, upon the occasion of natural relation, acquaintance, protection, dependence; each of these being distinct cements of society. And therefore to have no restraint from, no regard to others in our behaviour, is the speculative absurdity of considering ourselves as single and independent, as having nothing in our nature which has respect to our fellow-creatures, reduced to action and practice. And this is the

same absurdity, as to suppose a hand, or any part to have no natural respect to any other, or to the whole body.

But allowing all this, it may be asked, "Has not man dispositions and principles within, which lead him to do evil to others, as well as to do good? Whence come the many miseries else, which men are the authors and instruments of to each other?" These questions, so far as they relate to the foregoing discourse, may be answered by asking, Has not man also dispositions and principles within, which lead him to do evil to himself, as well as good? Whence come the many miseries else, sickness, pain, and death, which men are instruments and authors of to themselves?

It may be thought more easy to answer one of these questions than the other, but the answer to both is really the same; that mankind have ungoverned passions which they will gratify at any rate, as well to the injury of others, as in contradiction to known private interest; but that as there is no such thing as self-hatred, so neither is there any such thing as ill-will in one man towards another, emulation and resentment being away, whereas there is plainly benevolence or good-will; there is no such thing as love of injustice, oppression, treachery, ingratitude, but only eager desires after such and such external goods; which, according to a very ancient observation, the most abandoned would choose to obtain by innocent means, if they were as easy, and as effectual to their end; that even emulation and resentment, by any one who will consider what these passions really are in nature, will be found nothing to the purpose of this objection: and that the principles and passions in the mind of man, which are distinct both from self-love and benevolence, primarily and most directly lead to right behaviour with regard to others as well as himself, and only secondarily and accidentally to what is evil. Thus though men, to avoid the shame of one villany, are sometimes guilty of a greater, yet it is easy to see, that the original tendency of shame is to prevent the doing of shameful actions; and its leading men to conceal such actions when done, is only in consequence of their being done; *i. e.* of the passion's not having answered its first end.

If it be said, that there are persons in the world, who are in great measure without the natural affections towards their fellow-creatures: there are likewise instances of persons without the common natural affections to themselves: but the nature of man is not to be judged of by either of these, but by what appears in the common world, in the bulk of mankind.

I am afraid it would be thought very strange, if to confirm the truth of this account of human nature, and make out the justness of the foregoing comparison, it should be added, that, from what appears, men in fact as much and as often contradict that *part* of their nature which respects *self*, and which leads them to their *own private* good and happiness, as they contradict that *part* of it which respects *society*, and tends to *public* good, that there are as few persons, who attain the greatest satisfaction and enjoyment which they might attain in the present world; as who do the greatest good to others which they might do; nay, that there are as few who can be said really and in earnest to aim at one, as at the other. Take a survey of mankind: the world in general, the good and bad, almost without exception, equally are agreed, that were religion out of the case, the happiness of the present life would consist in a manner wholly in riches, honours, sensual gratifications; insomuch that one scarce hears a reflection made upon prudence, life, conduct, but upon this supposition. Yet on the contrary, that persons in the greatest affluence of fortune are no happier than such as have only a competency; that the cares and disappointments of ambition for the most part far exceed the satisfactions of it; as also the miserable intervals of intemperance and excess, and the many untimely deaths occasioned by a dissolute course of life: these things are all seen, acknowledged, by every one acknowledged; but are thought no objections against, though they expressly contradict, this universal principle, that the happiness of the present life consists in one or other of them. Whence is all this absurdity and contradiction? Is not the middle way obvious? Can any thing be more manifest, than that the happiness of life consists in these possessed and enjoyed only to a certain degree; that to pursue them beyond this degree, is always attended with more

inconvenience than advantage to a man's self, and often with extreme misery and unhappiness? Whence then, I say, is all this absurdity and contradiction? Is it really the result of consideration in mankind, how they may become most easy to themselves, most free from care, and enjoy the chief happiness attainable in this world? Or is it not manifestly owing either to this, that they have not cool and reasonable concern enough for themselves to consider wherein their chief happiness in the present life consists; or else, if they do consider it, that they will not act conformably to what is the result of that consideration: *i. e.* reasonable concern for themselves, or cool self-love is prevailed over by passion and appetite. So that from what appears, there is no ground to assert that those principles in the nature of man, which most directly lead to promote the good of our fellow-creatures, are more generally or in a greater degree violated, than those, which most directly lead us to promote our own private good and happiness.

The sum of the whole is plainly this. The nature of man considered in his single capacity, and with respect only to the present world, is adapted and leads him to attain the greatest happiness he can for himself in the present world. The nature of man considered in his public or social capacity leads him to a right behaviour in society, to that course of life which we call virtue. Men follow or obey their nature in both these capacities and respects to a certain degree, but not entirely: their actions do not come up to the whole of what their nature leads them to in either of these capacities or respects: and they often violate their nature in both, *i. e.* as they neglect the duties they owe to their fellow-creatures, to which their nature leads them; and are injurious, to which their nature is abhorrent; so there is a manifest negligence in men of their real happiness or interest in the present world, when that interest is inconsistent with a present gratification; for the sake of which they negligently, nay, even knowingly, are the authors and instruments of their own misery and ruin. Thus they are as often unjust to themselves as to others, and for the most part are equally so to both by the same actions.

SERMON II., III. UPON THE NATURAL SUPREMACY OF CONSCIENCE

For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves. — ROM. ii. 14.

As speculative truth admits of different kinds of proof, so likewise moral obligations may be shown by different methods. If the real nature of any creature leads him and is adapted to such and such purposes only, or more than to any other; this is a reason to believe the author of that nature intended it for those purposes. Thus there is no doubt the eye was intended for us to see with. And the more complex any constitution is, and the greater variety of parts there are which thus tend to some one end, the stronger is the proof that such end was designed. However, when the inward frame of man is considered as any guide in morals, the utmost caution must be used that none make peculiarities in their own temper, or any thing which is the effect of particular customs, though observable in several, the standard of what is common to the species; and above all, that the highest principle be not forgot or excluded, that to which belongs the adjustment and correction of all other inward movements and affections: which principle will of course have some influence, but which being in nature supreme, as shall now be shown, ought to preside over and govern all the rest. The difficulty of rightly observing the two former cautions; the appearance there is of some small diversity amongst mankind with respect to this faculty, with respect to their natural sense of moral good and evil; and the attention necessary to survey with any exactness what passes within, have occasioned that it is not so much agreed what is the standard of the internal nature of man, as of his external form. Neither is this last exactly settled. Yet we understand one another when we speak of the shape of a human body; so likewise we do when we speak of the heart and inward principles, how far soever the standard is from being exact or precisely fixed. There is therefore ground for an attempt of showing men to themselves, of showing them what course of life and behaviour their

real nature points out and would lead them to. Now obligations of virtue shown, and motives to the practice of it enforced, from a review of the nature of man, are to be considered as an appeal to each particular person's heart and natural conscience; as the external senses are appealed to for the proof of things cognizable by them. Since then our inward feelings, and the perceptions we receive from our external senses, are equally real; to argue from the former to life and conduct is as little liable to exception, as to argue from the latter to absolute speculative truth. A man can as little doubt whether his eyes were given him to see with, as he can doubt of the truth of the science of *optics*, deduced from ocular experiments. And allowing the inward feeling, shame; a man can as little doubt whether it was given him to prevent his doing shameful actions, as he can doubt whether his eyes were given him to guide his steps. And as to these inward feelings themselves; that they are real, that man has in his nature passions and affections, can no more be questioned, than that he has external senses. Neither can the former be wholly mistaken; though to a certain degree liable to greater mistakes than the latter.

There can be no doubt but that several propensions or instincts, several principles in the heart of man, carry him to society, and to contribute to the happiness of it, in a sense and a manner in which no inward principle leads him to evil. These principles, propensions, or instincts which lead him to do good, are approved of by a certain faculty within, quite distinct from these propensions themselves. All this hath been fully made out in the foregoing discourse.

But it may be said, "What is all this, though true, to the purpose of virtue and religion? these require, not only that we do good to others when we are led this way, by benevolence or reflection, happening to be stronger than other principles, passions, or appetites; but likewise that the *whole* character be formed upon thought and reflection; that *every* action be directed by some determinate rule, some other rule than the strength and prevalency of any principle or passion. What sign is there in our nature (for the inquiry is only about what is to be collected from

thence) that this was intended by its Author? Or how does so various and fickle a temper as that of man appear adapted thereto? It may indeed be absurd and unnatural for men to act without any reflection; nay, without regard to that particular kind of reflection which you call conscience; because this does belong to our nature. For as there never was a man but who approved one place, prospect, building, before another, so it does not appear that there ever was a man who would not have approved an action of humanity rather than of cruelty; interest and passion being quite out of the case. But interest and passion do come in, and are often too strong for and prevail over reflection and conscience. Now as brutes have various instincts, by which they are carried on to the end the Author of their nature intended them for: is not man in the same condition; with this difference only, that to his instincts (*i. e.* appetites and passions) is added the principle of reflection or conscience? And as brutes act agreeably to their nature, in following that principle or particular instinct which for the present is strongest in them; does not man likewise act agreeably to his nature, or obey the law of his creation, by following that principle, be it passion or conscience, which for the present happens to be strongest in him? Thus different men are by their particular nature hurried on to pursue honour or riches or pleasure: there are also persons whose temper leads them in an uncommon degree to kindness, compassion, doing good to their fellow-creatures: as there are others who are given to suspend their judgment, to weigh and consider things, and to act upon thought and reflection. Let every one then quietly follow his nature; as passion, reflection, appetite, the several parts of it, happen to be strongest: but let not the man of virtue take upon him to blame the ambitious, the covetous, the dissolute; since these equally with him obey and follow their nature. Thus, as in some cases we follow our nature in doing the works *contained in the law*, so in other cases we follow nature in doing contrary."

Now all this licentious talk entirely goes upon a supposition, that men follow their nature in the same sense, in violating the known rules of justice and honesty for the sake of a present grati-

fication, as they do in following those rules when they have no temptation to the contrary. And if this were true, that could not be so which St. Paul asserts, that men are *by nature a law to themselves*. If by following nature were meant only acting as we please, it would indeed be ridiculous to speak of nature as any guide in morals: nay the very mention of deviating from nature would be absurd; and the mention of following it, when spoken by way of distinction, would absolutely have no meaning. For did ever any one act otherwise than as he pleased? And yet the ancients speak of deviating from nature as vice; and of following nature so much as a distinction, that according to them the perfection of virtue consists therein. So that language itself should teach people another sense to the words *following nature*, than barely acting as we please. Let it however be observed, that though the words *human nature* are to be explained, yet the real question of this discourse is not concerning the meaning of words, any other than as the explanation of them may be needful to make out and explain the assertion, that *every man is naturally a law to himself*, that *every one may find within himself the rule of right, and obligations to follow it.* This St. Paul affirms in the words of the text, and this the foregoing objection really denies by seeming to allow it. And the objection will be fully answered, and the text before us explained, by observing that *nature* is considered in different views, and the word used in different senses; and by showing in what view it is considered, and in what sense the word is used, when intended to express and signify that which is the guide of life, that by which men are a law to themselves. I say, the explanation of the term will be sufficient, because from thence it will appear, that in some senses of the word *nature* cannot be, but that in another sense it manifestly is, a law to us.

I. By nature is often meant no more than some principle in man, without regard either to the kind or degree of it. Thus the passion of anger, and the affection of parents to their children, would be called equally *natural.* And as the same person hath often contrary principles, which at the same time draw contrary ways, he may by the same action both follow and contradict his

nature in this sense of the word; he may follow one passion and contradict another.

II. *Nature* is frequently spoken of as consisting in those passions which are strongest, and most influence the actions; which being vicious ones, mankind is in this sense naturally vicious, or vicious by nature. Thus St. Paul says of the Gentiles, *who were dead in trespasses and sins, and walked according to the spirit of disobedience, that they were by nature the children of wrath.*[1] They could be no otherwise *children of wrath* by nature, than they were vicious by nature.

Here then are two different senses of the word *nature*, in neither of which men can at all be said to be a law to themselves. They are mentioned only to be excluded; to prevent their being confounded, as the latter is in the objection, with another sense of it, which is now to be inquired after and explained.

III. The apostle asserts, that the Gentiles *do by* NATURE *the things contained in the law.* Nature is indeed here put by way of distinction from revelation, but yet it is not a mere negative. He intends to express more than that by which they *did not*, that by which they *did* the works of the law; namely, by *nature.* It is plain the meaning of the word is not the same in this passage as in the former, where it is spoken of as evil; for in this latter it is spoken of as good; as that by which they acted, or might have acted virtuously. What that is in man by which he is *naturally a law to himself*, is explained in the following words: *Which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another.* If there be a distinction to be made between the *works written in their hearts*, and the *witness of conscience ;* by the former must be meant the natural disposition to kindness and compassion, to do what is of good report, to which this apostle often refers, that part of the nature of man, treated of in the foregoing discourse, which with very little reflection and of course leads him to society, and by means of which he naturally acts a just and good part in it, unless other passions or interest lead him astray. Yet since other passions, and regards

[1] Ephes. ii. 3.

to private interest, which lead us (though indirectly, yet they lead us) astray, are themselves in a degree equally natural, and often most prevalent; and since we have no method of seeing the particular degrees in which one or the other is placed in us by nature; it is plain the former, considered merely as natural, good and right as they are, can no more be a law to us than the latter. But there is a superior principle of reflection or conscience in every man, which distinguishes between the internal principles of his heart, as well as his external actions; which passes judgment upon himself and them; pronounces determinately some actions to be in themselves just, right, good; others to be in themselves evil, wrong, unjust; which, without being consulted, without being advised with, magisterially exerts itself, and approves or condemns him the doer of them accordingly; and which, if not forcibly stopped, naturally and always of course goes on to anticipate a higher and more effectual sentence, which shall hereafter second and affirm its own. But this part of the office of conscience is beyond my present design explicitly to consider. It is by this faculty, natural to man, that he is a moral agent, that he is a law to himself; but this faculty, I say, is not to be considered merely as a principle in his heart, which is to have some influence as well as others; but considered as a faculty in kind and in nature supreme over all others, and which bears its own authority of being so.

This *prerogative*, this *natural supremacy*, of the faculty which surveys, approves or disapproves the several affections of our mind and actions of our lives, being that by which men *are a law to themselves*, their conformity or disobedience to which law of our nature renders their actions, in the highest and most proper sense, natural or unnatural; it is fit it be further explained to you: and I hope it will be so, if you will attend to the following reflections.

Man may act according to that principle or inclination which for the present happens to be strongest, and yet act in a way disproportionate to, and violate his real proper nature. Suppose a brute creature by any bait to be allured into a snare, by which he is destroyed. He plainly followed the bent of his nature, leading

him to gratify his appetite; there is an entire correspondence between his whole nature and such an action: such action therefore is natural. But suppose a man, foreseeing the same danger of certain ruin, should rush into it for the sake of a present gratification; he in this instance would follow his strongest desire, as did the brute creature: but there would be as manifest a disproportion, between the nature of a man and such an action, as between the meanest work of art and the skill of the greatest master in that art: which disproportion arises, not from considering the action singly in *itself*, or in its *consequences ;* but from *comparison* of it with the nature of the agent. And since such an action is utterly disproportionate to the nature of man, it is in the strictest and most proper sense unnatural; this word expressing that disproportion. Therefore instead of the words *disproportionate to his nature*, the word *unnatural* may now be put; this being more familiar to us: but let it be observed, that it stands for the same thing precisely.

Now what is it which renders such a rash action unnatural? Is it that he went against the principle of reasonable and cool self-love, considered *merely* as a part of his nature? No: for if he had acted the contrary way, he would equally have gone against a principle, or part of his nature, namely, passion or appetite. But to deny a present appetite, from foresight that the gratification of it would end in immediate ruin or extreme misery, is by no means an unnatural action ; whereas to contradict or go against cool self-love for the sake of such gratification, is so in the instance before us. Such an action then being unnatural; and its being so not arising from a man's going against a principle or desire barely, nor in going against that principle or desire which happens for the present to be strongest; it necessarily follows, that there must be some other difference or distinction to be made between these two principles, passion and cool self-love, than what I have yet taken notice of. And this difference, not being a difference in strength or degree, I call a difference in *nature* and in *kind*. And since, in the instance still before us, if passion prevails over self-love, the consequent action is unnatural; but if self-love prevails over passion, the action is natural: it is manifest that self-love is

in human nature a superior principle to passion. This may be contradicted without violating that nature; but the former cannot. So that, if we will act conformably to the economy of man's nature, reasonable self-love must govern. Thus, without particular consideration of conscience, we may have a clear conception of the *superior nature* of one inward principle to another; and see that there really is this natural superiority, quite distinct from degrees of strength and prevalency.

Let us now take a view of the nature of man, as consisting partly of various appetites, passions, affections, and partly of the principle of reflection or conscience; leaving quite out all consideration of the different degrees of strength, in which either of them prevail, and it will further appear that there is this natural superiority of one inward principle to another, and that it is even part of the idea of reflection or conscience.

Passion or appetite implies a direct simple tendency towards such and such objects, without distinction of the means by which they are to be obtained. Consequently it will often happen there will be a desire of particular objects, in cases where they cannot be obtained without manifest injury to others. Reflection or conscience comes in, and disapproves the pursuit of them in these circumstances; but the desire remains. Which is to be obeyed, appetite or reflection? Cannot this question be answered, from the economy and constitution of human nature merely, without saying which is strongest? Or need this at all come into consideration? Would not the question be *intelligibly* and fully answered by saying, that the principle of reflection or conscience being compared with the various appetites, passions, and affections in men, the former is manifestly superior and chief, without regard to strength? And how often soever the latter happens to prevail, it is mere *usurpation :* the former remains in nature and in kind its superior; and every instance of such prevalence of the latter is an instance of breaking in upon and violation of the constitution of man.

All this is no more than the distinction, which everybody is acquainted with, between *mere power* and *authority :* only instead of being intended to express the difference between what is pos-

sible, and what is lawful in civil government; here it has been shown applicable to the several principles in the mind of man. Thus that principle, by which we survey, and either approve or disapprove our own heart, temper, and actions, is not only to be considered as what is in its turn to have some influence; which may be said of every passion, of the lowest appetites; but likewise as being superior; as from its very nature manifestly claiming superiority over all others: insomuch that you cannot form a notion of this faculty, conscience, without taking in judgment, direction, superintendency. This is a constituent part of the idea, that is, of the faculty itself: and, to preside and govern, from the very economy and constitution of man, belongs to it. Had it strength, as it had right; had it power, as it had manifest authority, it would absolutely govern the world.

This gives us a further view of the nature of man; shows us what course of life we were made for: not only that our real nature leads us to be influenced in some degree by reflection and conscience; but likewise in what degree we are to be influenced by it, if we will fall in with, and act agreeably to the constitution of our nature: that this faculty was placed within to be our proper governor; to direct and regulate all under principles, passions, and motives of action. This is its right and office: thus sacred is its authority. And how often soever men violate and rebelliously refuse to submit to it, for supposed interest which they cannot otherwise obtain, or for the sake of passion which they cannot otherwise gratify; this makes no alteration as to the *natural right* and *office* of conscience.

Let us now turn this whole matter another way, and suppose there was no such thing at all as this natural supremacy of conscience; that there was no distinction to be made between one inward principle and another, but only that of strength ; and see what would be the consequence.

Consider then what is the latitude and compass of the actions of man with regard to himself, his fellow-creatures, and the Supreme Being? What are their bounds, besides that of our natural power? With respect to the two first, they are plainly no other than these: no man seeks misery as such for himself:

and no one unprovoked does mischief to another for its own sake. For in every degree within these bounds, mankind knowingly from passion or wantonness bring ruin and misery upon themselves and others. And impiety and profaneness, I mean, what every one would call so who believes the being of God, have absolutely no bounds at all. Men blaspheme the Author of nature, formally and in words renounce their allegiance to their Creator. Put an instance then with respect to any one of these three. Though we should suppose profane swearing, and in general that kind of impiety now mentioned, to mean nothing, yet it implies wanton disregard and irreverence towards an infinite Being, our Creator; and is this as suitable to the nature of man, as reverence and dutiful submission of heart towards that Almighty Being? Or suppose a man guilty of parricide, with all the circumstances of cruelty which such an action can admit of. This action is done in consequence of its principle being for the present strongest; and if there be no difference between inward principles, but only that of strength; the strength being given, you have the whole nature of the man given, so far as it relates to this matter. The action plainly corresponds to the principle, the principle being in that degree of strength it was; it therefore corresponds to the whole nature of the man. Upon comparing the action and the whole nature, there arises no disproportion, there appears no unsuitableness between them. Thus the *murder of a father* and the *nature of man* correspond to each other, as the same nature and an act of filial duty. If there be no difference between inward principles, but only that of strength; we can make no distinction between these two actions considered as the actions of such a creature; but in our coolest hours must approve or disapprove them equally: than which nothing can be reduced to a greater absurdity.

SERMON III

The natural supremacy of reflection or conscience being thus established; we may from it form a distinct notion of what is meant by *human nature*, when virtue is said to consist in following it, and vice in deviating from it.

As the idea of a civil constitution implies in it united strength, various subordinations, under one direction, that of the supreme authority; the different strength of each particular member of the society not coming into the idea; whereas, if you leave out the subordination, the union, and the one direction, you destroy and lose it: so reason, several appetites, passions, and affections, prevailing in different degrees of strength, is not *that* idea or notion of *human nature*; but *that nature* consists in these several principles considered as having a natural respect to each other, in the several passions being naturally subordinate to the one superior principle of reflection or conscience. Every bias, instinct, propension within, is a natural part of our nature, but not the whole: add to these the superior faculty, whose office it is to adjust, manage, and preside over them, and take in this its natural superiority, and you complete the idea of human nature. And as in civil government the constitution is broken in upon and violated by power and strength prevailing over authority; so the constitution of man is broken in upon and violated by the lower faculties or principles within prevailing over that which is in its nature supreme over them all. Thus, when it is said by ancient writers, that tortures and death are not so contrary to human nature as injustice; by this to be sure is not meant, that the aversion to the former in mankind is less strong and prevalent than their aversion to the latter; but that the former is only contrary to our nature considered in a partial view, and which takes in only the lowest part of it, that which we have in common with the brutes; whereas the latter is contrary to our nature, considered in a higher sense, as a system and constitution contrary to the whole economy of man.

And from all these things put together, nothing can be more evident, than that, exclusive of revelation, man cannot be considered as a creature left by his Maker to act at random, and live at large up to the extent of his natural power, as passion, humour, wilfulness, happen to carry him; which is the condition brute creatures are in: but that *from his make, constitution, or nature, he is in the strictest and most proper sense a law to himself.* He hath the rule of right within: what is wanting is only that he honestly attends to it.

The inquiries which have been made by men of leisure after some general rule, the conformity to, or disagreement from which, should denominate our actions good or evil, are in many respects of great service. Yet let any plain honest man, before he engages in any course of action, ask himself, Is this I am going about right, or is it wrong? Is it good, or is it evil? I do not in the least doubt, but that this question would be answered agreeably to truth and virtue, by almost any fair man in almost any circumstance. Neither do there appear any cases which look like exceptions to this; but those of superstition, and of partiality to ourselves. Superstition may perhaps be somewhat of an exception: but partiality to ourselves is not; this being itself dishonesty. For a man to judge that to be the equitable, the moderate, the right part for him to act, which he would see to be hard, unjust, oppressive in another; this is plain vice, and can proceed only from great unfairness of mind.

But allowing that mankind hath the rule of right within himself, yet it may be asked, "What obligations are we under to attend to and follow it?" I answer: it has been proved that man by his nature is a law to himself, without the particular distinct consideration of the positive sanctions of that law; the rewards and punishments which we feel, and those which from the light of reason we have ground to believe, are annexed to it. The question then carries its own answer along with it. Your obligation to obey this law, is its being the law of your nature. That your conscience approves of and attests to such a course of action, is itself alone an obligation. Conscience does not only offer itself to show us the way we should walk in, but it likewise carries its own authority with it, that it is our natural guide; the guide assigned us by the Author of our nature: it therefore belongs to our condition of being, it is our duty to walk in that path, and follow this guide, without looking about to see whether we may not possibly forsake them with impunity.

However, let us hear what is to be said against obeying this law of our nature. And the sum is no more than this: "Why should we be concerned about anything out of and beyond ourselves? If we do find within ourselves regards to others, and

restraints of we know not how many different kinds; yet these being embarrassments, and hindering us from going the nearest way to our own good, why should we not endeavour to suppress and get over them?"

Thus people go on with words, which, when applied to human nature, and the condition in which it is placed in this world, have really no meaning. For does not all this kind of talk go upon the supposition, that our happiness in this world consists in somewhat quite distinct from regard to others; and that it is the privilege of vice to be without restraint or confinement? Whereas, on the contrary, the enjoyments, in a manner all the common enjoyments of life, even the pleasures of vice, depend upon these regards of one kind or another to our fellow-creatures. Throw off all regards to others, and we should be quite indifferent to infamy and to honour; there could be no such thing at all as ambition; and scarce any such thing as covetousness; for we should likewise be equally indifferent to the disgrace of poverty, the several neglects and kinds of contempt which accompany this state; and to the reputation of riches, the regard and respect they usually procure. Neither is restraint by any means peculiar to one course of life; but our very nature, exclusive of conscience and our condition, lays us under an absolute necessity of it. We cannot gain any end whatever without being confined to the proper means, which is often the most painful and uneasy confinement. And in numberless instances a present appetite cannot be gratified without such apparent and immediate ruin and misery, that the most dissolute man in the world chooses to forego the pleasure, rather than endure the pain.

Is the meaning then, to indulge those regards to our fellow-creatures, and submit to those restraints, which upon the whole are attended with more satisfaction than uneasiness, and get over only those which bring more uneasiness and inconvenience than satisfaction? "Doubtless this was our meaning." You have changed sides then. Keep to this; be consistent with yourselves; and you and the men of virtue are *in general* perfectly agreed. But let us take care and avoid mistakes. Let it not be taken for granted that the temper of envy, rage, resentment, yields greater

delight than meekness, forgiveness, compassion, and good-will; especially when it is acknowledged that rage, envy, resentment, are in themselves mere misery; and the satisfaction arising from the indulgence of them is little more than relief from that misery; whereas the temper of compassion and benevolence is itself delightful; and the indulgence of it, by doing good, affords new positive delight and enjoyment. Let it not be taken for granted, that the satisfaction arising from the reputation of riches and power, however obtained, and from the respect paid to them, is greater than the satisfaction arising from the reputation of justice, honesty, charity, and the esteem which is universally acknowledged to be their due. And if it be doubtful which of these satisfactions is the greatest, as there are persons who think neither of them very considerable, yet there can be no doubt concerning ambition and covetousness, virtue and a good mind, considered in themselves, and as leading to different courses of life; there can, I say, be no doubt, which temper and which course is attended with most peace and tranquillity of mind, which with most perplexity, vexation, and inconvenience. And both the virtues and vices which have been now mentioned, do in a manner equally imply in them regards of one kind or another to our fellow-creatures. And with respect to restraint and confinement: whoever will consider the restraints from fear and shame, the dissimulation, mean arts of concealment, servile compliances, one or other of which belong to almost every course of vice, will soon be convinced that the man of virtue is by no means upon a disadvantage in this respect. How many instances are there in which men feel and own and cry aloud under the chains of vice with which they are enthralled, and which yet they will not shake off! How many instances, in which persons manifestly go through more pains and self-denial to gratify a vicious passion, than would have been necessary to the conquest of it! To this is to be added, that when virtue is become habitual, when the temper of it is acquired, what was before confinement ceases to be so, by becoming choice and delight. Whatever restraint and guard upon ourselves may be needful to unlearn any unnatural distortion or odd gesture; yet, in all propriety of speech, natural behaviour

must be the most easy and unrestrained. It is manifest that, in the common course of life, there is seldom any inconsistency between our duty and what is *called* interest; it is much seldomer that there is an inconsistency between duty and what is really our present interest; meaning by interest, happiness and satisfaction. Self-love then, though confined to the interest of the present world, does in general perfectly coincide with virtue; and leads us to one and the same course of life. But, whatever exceptions there are to this, which are much fewer than they are commonly thought, all shall be set right at the final distributions of things. It is a manifest absurdity to suppose evil prevailing finally over good, under the conduct and administration of a perfect mind.

The whole argument, which I have been now insisting upon, may be thus summed up, and given you in one view. The nature of man is adapted to some course of action or other. Upon comparing some actions with this nature, they appear suitable and correspondent to it; from comparison of other actions with the same nature, there arises to our view some unsuitableness or disproportion. The correspondence of actions to the nature of the agent renders them natural: their disproportion to it, unnatural. That an action is correspondent to the nature of the agent, does not arise from its being agreeable to the principle which happens to be the strongest; for it may be so, and yet be quite disproportionate to the nature of the agent. The correspondence therefore, or disproportion, arises from somewhat else. This can be nothing but a difference in nature and kind, altogether distinct from strength, between the inward principles. Some then are in nature and kind superior to others. And the correspondence arises from the action being conformable to the higher principle; and the unsuitableness from its being contrary to it. Reasonable self-love and conscience are the chief or superior principles in the nature of man, because an action may be suitable to this nature, though all other principles be violated; but becomes unsuitable, if either of those are. Conscience and self-love, if we understand our true happiness, always lead us the same way. Duty and interest are perfectly coincident; for the most part in this world, but entirely and in every instance if we take in the future, and the

whole; this being implied in the notion of a good and perfect administration of things. Thus they who have been so wise in their generation as to regard only their own supposed interest, at the expense and to the injury of others, shall at last find, that he who has given up all the advantages of the present world, rather than violate his conscience and the relations of life, has infinitely better provided for himself, and secured his own interest and happiness.

FRANCIS HUTCHESON

(1694–1747)

AN INQUIRY CONCERNING MORAL GOOD AND EVIL*

SECTION I. OF THE MORAL SENSE BY WHICH WE PERCEIVE VIRTUE AND VICE

I. That the perceptions of moral good and evil, are perfectly different from those of natural good, or advantage, every one must convince himself by reflecting upon the different manner in which he finds himself affected when these objects occur to him. Had we no sense of good distinct from the advantage or interest arising from the external senses, and the perceptions of beauty and harmony; our admiration and love toward a fruitful field or commodious habitation, would be much the same with what we have toward a generous friend or any noble character; for both are or may be advantageous to us; and we should no more admire any action, or love any person in a distant country or age, whose influence could not extend to us, than we love the mountains of Peru, while we are unconcerned in the Spanish trade. We should have the same sentiments and affections toward inanimate beings, which we have toward rational agents; which yet every one knows to be false. Upon comparison we say, "Why should we admire or love with esteem inanimate beings? They have no intention of good to us; their nature makes them fit for our uses, which they neither know nor study to serve. But it is not so with rational agents: they study our interest, and delight in our happiness, and are benevolent toward us."

We are all then conscious of the difference between that love and esteem, or perception of moral excellence, which benevolence

* From F. Hutcheson's *An Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue. In Two Treatises: I. Concerning Beauty or Order and Design: II. Concerning Moral Good and Evil.* 1st ed., London, 1725; 2d ed., *ib.*, 1726; 3d ed., *ib.*, 1729; 4th corr. ed., 1738.

excites toward the person in whom we observe it, and that opinion of natural goodness, which only raises desire of possession toward the good object. Now, "What should make this difference, if all approbation, or sense of good be from prospect of advantage? Do not inanimate objects promote our advantage, as well as benevolent persons who do us offices of kindness and friendship? Should we not then have the same endearing sentiments of both? or only the same cold opinion of advantage in both?" The reason why it is not so must be this, "that we have a distinct perception of beauty or excellence in the kind affections of rational agents, whence we are determined to admire and love such characters and persons."

Suppose we reap the same advantage from two men, one of whom serves us from delight in our happiness, and love toward us; the other from views of self-interest, or by constraint: both are in this case equally beneficial or advantageous to us, and yet we shall have quite different sentiments of them. We must then certainly have other perceptions of moral actions than those of advantage; and that power of receiving these perceptions may be called a *moral sense*, since the definition agrees to it, viz.: a determination of the mind to receive any idea from the presence of an object which occurs to us, independent on our will.

This perhaps will be equally evident from our ideas of evil done to us designedly by a rational agent. Our senses of natural good and evil would make us receive with equal serenity and composure, an assault, a buffet, an affront from a neighbour, a cheat from a partner, or trustee, as we would an equal damage from the fall of a beam, a tile, or a tempest; and we should have the same affections and sentiments of both. Villany, treachery, cruelty, would be as meekly resented as a blast, or mildew, or an overflowing stream. But I fancy every one is very differently affected on these occasions, though there may be equal natural evil in both. Nay, actions no way detrimental may occasion the strongest anger and indignation, if they evidence only impotent hatred or contempt. And on the other hand, the intervention of moral ideas may prevent our hatred of the agent, or bad moral

apprehension of that action, which causes to us the greatest natural evil. Thus the opinion of justice in any sentence, will prevent all ideas of moral evil in the execution or hatred toward the magistrate, who is the immediate cause of our greatest sufferings.

II. In our sentiments of actions which affect ourselves, there is indeed a mixture of the ideas of natural and moral good, which require some attention to separate them. But when we reflect upon the actions which affect other persons only, we may observe the moral ideas unmixed with those of natural good or evil. For let it be here observed, that those senses by which we perceive pleasure in natural objects, whence they are constituted advantageous, could never raise in us any desire of public good, but only of what was good to ourselves in particular. Nor could they ever make us approve an action because of its promoting the happiness of others. And yet as soon as any action is represented to us as flowing from love, humanity, gratitude, compassion, a study of the good of others, and a delight in their happiness, although it were in the most distant part of the world or in some past age, we feel joy within us, admire the lovely action, and praise its author. And on the contrary, every action represented as flowing from hatred, delight in the misery of others, or ingratitude, raises abhorrence and aversion.

It is true indeed that the actions we approve in others, are generally imagined to tend to the natural good of mankind, or of some parts of it. But whence this secret chain between each person and mankind? How is my interest connected with the most distant parts of it? And yet I must admire actions which are beneficial to them, and love the author. Whence this love, compassion, indignation, and hatred toward even feigned characters, in the most distant ages and nations, according as they appear kind, faithful, compassionate, or of the opposite dispositions, toward their imaginary contemporaries? If there is no moral sense, which makes rational actions appear beautiful or deformed; if all approbation be from the interest of the approver, "What 's Hecuba to *us* or *we* to Hecuba?" (*Hamlet.*)

V. This moral sense, either of our own actions or of those of others, has this in common with our other senses, that however our desire of virtue may be counterbalanced by interest, our sentiment or perception of its beauty cannot, as it certainly might be, if the only ground of our approbation were views of advantage. Let us consider this both as to our own actions and those of others.

A covetous man shall dislike any branch of trade, how useful soever it may be to the public, if there is no gain for himself in it; here is an aversion from interest. Propose a sufficient premium, and he shall be the first who sets about it, with full satisfaction in his own conduct. Now is it the same way with our sense of moral actions? Should any one advise us to wrong a minor, or orphan, or to do an ungrateful action toward a benefactor; we at first view abhor it: assure us that it will be very advantageous to us, propose even a reward; our sense of the action is not altered. It is true these motives may make us undertake it, but they have no more influence upon us to make us approve it, than a physician's advice has to make a nauseous potion pleasant to the taste, when we perhaps force ourselves to take it for the recovery of health.

Had we no notion of actions beside our opinion of their advantage, or disadvantage, could we ever choose an action as advantageous, which we are conscious is still evil? as it too often happens in human affairs. Where would be the need of such high bribes to prevail with men to abandon the interests of a ruined party, or of tortures to force out the secrets of their friends? Is it so hard to convince men's understandings, if that be the only faculty we have to do with, that it is probably more advantageous to secure present gain, and avoid present evils, by joining with the prevalent party, than to wait for the remote possibility of future good, upon a revolution often improbable, and sometimes unexpected? And when men are overpersuaded by advantage, do they always prove their own conduct? Nay, how often is their remaining life odious and shameful, in their own sense of it, as well as in that of others to whom the base action was profitable?

If any one becomes satisfied with his own conduct in such a case, upon what ground is it? How does he please himself, or vindicate his actions to others? Never by reflecting upon his private advantage, or alleging this to others as a vindication; but by gradually warping into the moral principles of his new party; for no party is without them. And thus men become pleased with their actions under some appearance of moral good, distinct from advantage.

It may perhaps be alleged, "that in those actions of our own which we call good, there is this constant advantage, superior to all others, which is the ground of our approbation, and the motive to them from self-love, viz.: That we suppose, the deity will reward them." This will be more fully considered afterwards: at present it is enough to observe that many have high notions of honour, faith, generosity, justice who have scarce any opinions about the deity, or any thoughts of future rewards; and abhor anything which is treacherous, cruel, or unjust, without any regard to future punishments.

But further, though these rewards and punishments may make my own actions appear advantageous to me, and make me approve them from self-love, yet they would never make me approve, and love another person for the like actions, whose merit would not be imputed to me. Those actions are advantageous indeed to the agent; but his advantage is not my advantage; and self-love could never influence me to approve actions as advantageous to others, or to love the authors of them on that account.

This is the second thing to be considered, "Whether our sense of the moral good or evil in the actions of others can be overbalanced or bribed by views of interest." Now I may indeed easily be capable of wishing, that another would do an action I abhor as morally evil, if it were very advantageous to me: interest in that case may overbalance my desire of virtue in another. But no interest to myself will make me approve an action as morally good, which, without that interest to myself, would have appeared morally evil, if, upon computing its whole effects, it appears to produce as great a moment of good in the whole,

when it is not beneficial to me, as it did before when it was. In our sense of moral good or evil, our own private advantage or loss is of no more moment, than the advantage or loss of a third person, to make an action appear good or evil. This sense therefore cannot be over-balanced by interest. How ridiculous an attempt would it be to engage a man by rewards, or to threaten him into a good opinion of an action which was contrary to his moral notions? We may procure dissimulation by such means, and that is all.

VII. If what is said makes it appear that we have some other amiable idea of actions than that of advantage to ourselves, we may conclude, "that this perception of moral good is not derived from custom, education, example, or study." These give us no new ideas. They might make us see advantage to ourselves in actions whose usefulness did not at first appear; or give us opinions of some tendency of actions to our detriment, by some nice deductions of reason, or by a rash prejudice, when upon the first view of the action we should have observed no such thing; but they never could have made us apprehend actions as amiable or odious, without any consideration of our own advantage.

VIII. It remains then, "that as the author of nature has determined us to receive by our external senses pleasant or disagreeable ideas of objects, according as they are useful or hurtful to our bodies; and to receive from uniform objects the pleasures of beauty and harmony, to excite us to the pursuit of knowledge, and to reward us for it; or to be an argument to us of his goodness, as the uniformity itself proves his existence, whether we had a sense of beauty in uniformity or not: in the same manner he has given us a *moral sense*, to direct our actions, and to give us still nobler pleasures; so that while we are only intending the good of others, we undesignedly promote our own greatest private good."

We are not to imagine that this moral sense, more than the other senses, supposes any innate ideas, knowledge, or practical proposition. We mean by it only a determination of our minds to receive amiable or disagreeable ideas of actions when they

occur to our observation, antecedent to any opinions of advantage or loss to redound to ourselves from them; even as we are pleased with a regular form, or an harmonious composition, without having any knowledge of mathematics, or seeing any advantage in that form, or composition, different from the immediate pleasure.

SECTION II. CONCERNING THE IMMEDIATE MOTIVE TO VIRTUOUS ACTIONS

The motives of human actions, or their immediate causes, would be best understood after considering the passions and affections, but here we shall only consider the springs of the actions which we call virtuous, as far as it is necessary to settle the general foundation of the moral sense.

I. Every action, which we apprehend as either morally good or evil, is always supposed to flow from some affection toward rational agents; and whatever we call virtue or vice, is either some affection, or some action consequent upon it. Or it may perhaps be enough to make an action or omission appear vicious, if it argues the want of such affection toward rational agents, as we expect in characters counted morally good. All the actions counted religious in any country are supposed by those who count them so to flow from some affections toward the Deity; and whatever we call social virtue, we still suppose to flow from affections toward our fellow-creatures: for in this all seem to agree "that external motions, when accompanied with no affections toward God or man, or evidencing no want of the expected affections toward either, can have no moral good or evil in them."

Ask, for instance, the most abstemious hermit, if temperance of itself would be morally good, supposing it showed no obedience toward the Deity, made us no fitter for devotion, or the service of mankind, or the search after truth, than luxury; and he will easily grant that it would be no moral good, though still it might be naturally good or advantageous to health. And mere

courage, or contempt of danger, if we conceive it to have no regard to the defence of the innocent, or repairing of wrongs, or self-interest, would only entitle its possessor to Bedlam. When such sort of courage is sometimes admired, it is upon some secret apprehension of a good intention in the use of it, or as a natural ability capable of an useful application. Prudence, if it was only employed in promoting private interest, is never imagined to be a virtue; and justice, or observing a strict equality, if it has no regard to the good of mankind, the preservation of rights, and securing peace, is a quality properer for its ordinary gestamen, a beam and scales, than for a rational agent. So that these four qualities, commonly called cardinal virtues, obtain that name because they are dispositions universally necessary to promote public good, and denote affections toward rational agents; otherwise there would appear no virtue in them.

II. Now if it can be made appear that none of these affections which we call virtuous spring from self-love, or desire of private interest; since all virtue is either some such affections, or actions consequent upon them; it must necessarily follow, "that virtue is not pursued from the interest or self-love of the pursuer, or any motives of his own advantage."

The affections which are of most importance in morals are love and hatred: all the rest seem but different modifications of these two original affections. Now in discoursing of love toward rational agents, we need not be cautioned not to include that love between the sexes, which, when no other affections accompany it, is only desire of pleasure, and is never counted a virtue. Love toward rational agents is subdivided into love of complacence, or esteem, and love of benevolence; and hatred is subdivided into hatred of displicence or contempt, and hatred of malice. Concerning each of these separately we shall consider, "whether they can be influenced by motives of self-interest."

Love of complacence, esteem, or good-liking, at first view appears to be disinterested, and so the hatred of displicence or dislike; and are entirely excited by some moral qualities, good or evil, apprehended to be in the objects; which qualities the very frame of our nature determines us to love or hate, to approve or

disapprove, according to the moral sense above explained.[1] Propose to a man all the rewards in the world, or threaten all the punishments, to engage him to love with esteem and complacence a third person entirely unknown, or if known, apprehended to be cruel, treacherous, ungrateful; you may procure external obsequiousness, or good offices, or dissimulation of love; but real love of esteem no price can purchase. And the same is obvious as to hatred of contempt, which no motive of advantage can prevent. On the contrary, represent a character as generous, kind, faithful, humane, though in the most distant parts of the world, and we cannot avoid loving it with esteem and complacence. A bribe may make us attempt to ruin such a man, or some strong motive of advantage may excite us to oppose his interest; but it can never make us hate him, while we apprehend him as morally excellent. Nay, when we consult our own hearts, we shall find that we can scarce ever persuade ourselves to attempt any mischief against such persons from any motive of advantage, nor execute it without the strongest reluctance and remorse, until we have blinded ourselves into a bad opinion of the person in a moral sense.

III. As to the love of benevolence, the very name excludes self-interest. We never call that man benevolent, who is in fact useful to others, but at the same time only intends his own interest, without any desire of, or delight in, the good of others. If there be any benevolence at all, it must be disinterested; for the most useful action imaginable, loses all appearance of benevolence, as soon as we discern that it only flowed from self-love or interest. Thus never were any human actions more advantageous than the inventions of fire and iron; but if these were casual, or if the inventor only intended his own interest in them, there is nothing which can be called benevolent in them. Wherever then benevolence is supposed, there it is imagined disinterested and designed for the good of others.

But it must be here observed that as all men have self-love, as well as benevolence, these two principles may jointly excite a man to the same action; and then they are to be considered as

[1] See Sect. i.

two forces impelling the same body to motion; sometimes they conspire, sometimes are indifferent to each other, and sometimes are in some degree opposite. Thus, if a man have such strong benevolence as would have produced an action without any views of self-interest; that such a man has also in view private advantage, along with public good, as the effect of his action, does no way diminish the benevolence of the action. When he would not have produced so much public good had it not been for prospect of self-interest, then the effect of self-love is to be deducted, and his benevolence is proportioned to the remainder of good, which pure benevolence would have produced. When a man's benevolence is hurtful to himself, then self-love is opposite to benevolence, and the benevolence is proportioned to the sum of the good produced, added to the resistance of self-love surmounted by it. In most cases it is impossible for men to know how far their fellows are influenced by the one or other of these principles; but yet the general truth is sufficiently certain, that this is the way in which the benevolence of actions is to be computed. Since then no love to rational agents can proceed from self-interest, every action must be disinterested, as far as it flows from love to rational agents.

If any enquire, "whence arises this love of esteem or benevolence to good men, or to mankind in general, if not from some nice views or self-interest? Or how we can be moved to desire the happiness of others, without any view to our own?" it may be answered, "that the same cause which determines us to pursue happiness for ourselves, determines us both to esteem and benevolence on their proper occasions; even the very frame of our nature, or a generous instinct, which shall be afterwards explained."

VI. There is one objection against disinterested love, which occurs from considering, "that nothing so effectually excites our love toward rational agents, as their beneficence to us; whence we are led to imagine that our love of persons, as well as irrational objects, flows entirely from self-interest." But let us here examine ourselves more narrowly. Do we only love the beneficent because it is our interest to love them? Or do we choose to

love them because our love is the means of procuring their bounty? If it be so then we could indifferently love any character even to obtain the bounty of a third person; or we could be bribed by a third person to love the greatest villain heartily as we may be bribed to external offices: now this is plainly impossible.

But further, is not our love always the consequent of bounty, and not the means of procuring it? External show, obsequiousness, and dissimulation may precede an opinion of beneficence; but real love always presupposes it, and shall necessarily arise even when we expect no more, from consideration of past benefits. Or can any one say he only loves the beneficent, as he does a field or garden, because of its advantage? His love then must cease toward one who has ruined himself in kind offices to him, when he can do him no more; as we cease to love an inanimate object which ceases to be useful, unless a poetical prosopopœia animate it, and raise an imaginary gratitude, which is indeed pretty common. And then again, our love would be the same towards the worst characters that 't is towards the best, if they were equally bountiful to us, which is also false. Beneficence then must raise our love as it is an amiable moral quality: and hence we love even those who are beneficent to others.

If then no love toward persons be influenced by self-love or views of interest, and all virtue flows from love toward persons, or some other affection equally disinterested, it remains, "that there must be some other motive than self-love, or interest, which excites us to the actions we call virtuous."

VIII. The last, and only remaining objection against what has been said, is this, "that virtue perhaps is pursued because of the concomitant pleasure." To which we may answer, first, by observing, that this plainly supposes a sense of virtue antecedent to ideas of advantage, upon which this advantage is founded; and that from the very frame of our nature we are determined to perceive pleasure in the practice of virtue, and to approve it when practised by ourselves or others.

But further, may we not justly question, whether all virtue is pleasant? Or, whether we are not determined to some amiable

actions in which we find no pleasure? 'T is true all the passions and affections justify themselves; or, we approve our being affected in a certain manner on certain occasions, and condemn a person who is otherwise affected. So the sorrowful, the angry, the jealous, the compassionate, think it reasonable they should be so upon the several occasions which move these passions; but we should not therefore say that sorrow, anger, jealousy, or pity are pleasant, and that we choose to be in these passions because of the concomitant pleasure. The matter is plainly this. The frame of our nature, on such occasions as move these passions, determines us to be thus affected, and to approve our being so: nay, we dislike any person who is not thus affected upon such occasions, notwithstanding the uneasiness of these passions. This uneasiness determines us to endeavour an alteration in the state of the object, but not otherwise to remove the painful affection, while the occasion is unaltered; which shows that these affections are neither chosen for their concomitant pleasure, nor voluntarily brought upon ourselves with a view to private good. The actions which these passions move us to, tend generally to remove the uneasy passion by altering the state of the object; but the removal of our pain is seldom directly intended in the uneasy benevolent passions, nor is the alteration intended in the state of the objects by such passions imagined to be a private good to the agent, as it always is in the selfish passions. If our sole intention in compassion or pity was the removal of our pain, we should run away, shut our eyes, divert our thoughts from the miserable object, to avoid the pain of compassion, which we seldom do; nay, we crowd about such objects, and voluntarily expose ourselves to pain, unless reason, and reflection upon our inability to relieve the miserable, countermand our inclination; or some selfish affection, as fear of danger, overbalances it.

Now there are several morally amiable actions, which flow from these passions which are so uneasy; such as attempts of relieving the distressed, of defending the injured, of repairing of wrongs done by ourselves. These actions are often accompanied with no pleasure in the mean time, nor have they any subsequent pleasure, except as they are successful; unless it be that which

may arise from calm reflection, when the passion is over, upon our having been in a disposition, which to our moral sense appears lovely and good: but this pleasure is never intended in the heat of action, nor is it any motive exciting to it.

Besides, in the pleasant passions, we do not love because it is pleasant to love; we do not choose this state because it is an advantageous or pleasant state: this passion necessarily arises from seeing its proper object, a morally good character. And if we could love, whenever we see it would be our interest to love, love could be bribed by a third person; and we could never love persons in distress, for then our love gives us pain. The same observation may be extended to all the other affections from which virtue is supposed to flow. And from the whole we may conclude, "that the virtuous agent is never apprehended by us as acting only from views of his own interest, but as principally influenced by some other motive."

IX. Having removed these false springs of virtuous actions, let us next establish the true one, viz. some determination of our nature to study the good of others; or some instinct, antecedent to all reason from interest, which influences us to the love of others; even as the moral sense above explained [1] determines us to approve the actions which flow from this love in ourselves or others. This disinterested affection may appear strange to men impressed with notions of self-love as the sole motive of action, from the pulpit, the schools, the systems, and conversations regulated by them; but let us consider it in its strongest, and simplest kinds, and when we see the possibility of it in these instances, we may easily discover its universal extent.

An honest farmer will tell you, that he studies the preservation and happiness of his children, and loves them without any design of good to himself. But say some of our philosophers, "the happiness of their children gives parents pleasure, and their misery gives them pain; and therefore to obtain the former and avoid the latter, they study from self-love the good of their children." Suppose several merchants joined in partnership of their whole effects; one of them is employed abroad in managing the stock of

[1] See Sect. i.

the company; his prosperity occasions gain to all, and his losses give them pain from their share in the loss: is this then the same kind of affection with that of parents to their children? Is there the same tender, personal regard? I fancy no parent will say so. In this case of merchants there is a plain conjunction of interest; but whence the conjunction of interest between the parent and child? Do the child's sensations give pleasure or pain to the parent? Is the parent hungry, thirsty, sick, when the child is so? "No, but his love to the child makes him affected with his pleasures or pains." This love then is antecedent to the conjunction of interest, and the cause of it, not the effect: this love then must be disinterested. "No," says another sophist, "children are parts of ourselves, and in loving them we but love ourselves in them." A very good answer! Let us carry it as far as it will go. How are they parts of ourselves? Not as a leg or an arm: we are not conscious of their sensations. "But their bodies were formed from parts of ours." So is a fly, or a maggot which may breed in any discharged blood or humour: very dear insects surely! There must be something else then which makes children parts of ourselves; and what is this but that affection which Nature determines us to have towards them? This love makes them parts of ourselves and therefore does not flow from their being so before. This is indeed a good metaphor; and wherever we find a determination among several rational agents to mutual love, let each individual be looked upon as a part of a great whole or system, and concern himself in the public good of it.

But a later author observes,[1] "that natural affection in parents is weak, till the children begin to give evidences of knowledge and affections." Mothers say they feel it strong from the very first, and yet I could wish for the destruction of his hypothesis, that what he alleges was true; as I fancy it is in some measure, though we may find in some parents an affection towards idiots. The observing of understanding and affections in children, which make them appear moral agents, can increase love toward them without prospect of interest; for I hope this increase of love is not from prospect of advantage from the knowledge or affections

[1] See Mandeville's *Fable of the Bees.*

of children, for whom parents are still toiling, and never intend to be refunded their expenses, or recompensed for their labour, but in cases of extreme necessity. If then the observing a moral capacity can be the occasion of increasing love without self-interest even from the frame of our nature; pray, may not this be a foundation of weaker degrees of love where there is no preceding tie of parentage, and extend it to all mankind?

X. And that this is so in fact will appear by considering some more distant attachments. If we observe any neighbours, from whom perhaps we have received no good offices, formed into friendships, families, partnerships, and with honesty and kindness assisting each other; pray ask any mortal if he would not be better pleased with their prosperity, when their interests are no way inconsistent with his own, than with their misery and ruin; and you shall find a bond of benevolence further extended than a family and children, although the ties are not so strong. Again, suppose a person for trade had left his native country, and with all his kindred had settled his fortunes abroad without any view of returning; and only imagine he had received no injuries from his country: ask such a man, would it give him no pleasure to hear of the prosperity of his country? Or could he, now that his interests are separated from that of his nation, as gladly hear that it was laid waste by tyranny or a foreign power? I fancy his answer would show us a benevolence extended beyond neighbourhoods or acquaintances. Let a man of a composed temper, out of the hurry of private affairs, only read of the constitution of a foreign country, even in the most distant parts of the earth, and observe art, design, and a study of public good in the laws of this association; and he shall find his mind moved in their favour; he shall be contriving rectifications and amendments in their constitution, and regret any unlucky part of it which may be pernicious to their interest; he shall bewail any disaster which befalls them, and accompany all their fortunes with the affections of a friend. Now this proves benevolence to be in some degree extended to all mankind, where there is no interfering interest which from self-love may obstruct it. And had we any notions of rational agents, capable of moral affections, in the most

distant planets, our good wishes would still attend them, and we should delight in their happiness.

XI. Here we may transiently remark the foundation of what we call national love, or love of one's native country. Whatever place we have lived in for any considerable time, there we have most distinctly remarked the various affections of human nature; we have known many lovely characters; we remember the associations, friendships, families, natural affections, and other human sentiments: our moral sense determines us to approve these lovely dispositions where we have most distinctly observed them, and our benevolence concerns us in the interests of the persons possessed of them. When we come to observe the like as distinctly in another country we begin to acquire a national love toward it also; nor has our own country any other preference in our idea, unless it be by an association of the pleasant ideas of our youth, with the buildings, fields, and woods where we received them. This may let us see how tyranny, faction, a neglect of justice, a corruption of manners, or anything which occasions the misery of the subjects, destroys this national love, and the dear idea of a country.

We ought here to observe that the only reason of that apparent want of natural affection among collateral relations, is, that these natural inclinations in many cases are overpowered by self-love, where there happens any opposition of interests; but where this does not happen, we shall find all mankind under its influence, though with different degrees of strength, according to the nearer or more remote relations they stand in to each other; and according as the natural affection of benevolence is joined with and strengthened by esteem, gratitude, compassion, or other kind affections; or on the contrary, weakened by displicence, anger, or envy.

SECTION III. THE SENSE OF VIRTUE REDUCIBLE TO ONE GENERAL FOUNDATION. THE MANNER OF COMPUTING THE MORALITY OF ACTIONS

I. If we examine all the actions which are counted amiable anywhere, and enquire into the grounds upon which they are approved, we shall find that in the opinion of the person who approves them, they always appear as benevolent or flowing from love of others and a study of their happiness, whether the approver be one of the persons beloved, or profited, or not; so that kind affections which incline us to make others happy, and all actions supposed to flow from such affections, appear morally good, if while they are benevolent toward some persons, they be not pernicious to others. Nor shall we find anything amiable in any action whatsoever, where there is no benevolence imagined; nor in any disposition, or capacity, which is not supposed applicable to, and designed for benevolent purposes. Nay, as we before observed,[1] the actions which in fact are exceedingly useful, shall appear void of moral beauty, if we know they proceeded from no kind intentions toward others; and yet an unsuccessful attempt of kindness or of promoting public good shall appear as amiable as the most successful, if it flowed from as strong benevolence.

II. Hence those affections which would lead us to do good to our benefactor shall appear amiable, and the contrary affections odious, even when our actions cannot possibly be of any advantage or hurt to him. Thus a sincere love and gratitude toward our benefactor, a cheerful readiness to do whatever he shall require, how burdensome soever, a hearty inclination to comply with his intentions, and contentment with the state he has placed us in, are the strongest evidences of benevolence we can show to such a person; and therefore they must appear exceedingly amiable. And under these is included all the rational devotion, or religion toward a Deity apprehended as good, which we can possibly perform.

[1] See Sect. ii. Art. 3, Par. 1 (§ 92); Art. 6, Par. 3 (§ 100).

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III. Again, that we may see how love, or benevolence, is the foundation of all apprehended excellence in social virtues, let us only observe that amidst the diversity of sentiments on this head among various sects, this is still allowed to be the way of deciding the controversy about any disputed practice, viz. to enquire whether this conduct, or the contrary, will most effectually promote the public good. The morality is immediately adjusted, when the natural tendency or influence of the action upon the universal natural good of mankind is agreed upon. That which produces more good than evil in the whole is acknowledged good; and what does not, is counted evil. In this case we no other way regard the good of the actor, or that of those who are thus enquiring, than as they make a part of the great system.

In our late debates about passive obedience, and the right of resistance in defence of privileges, the point disputed among men of sense was, "whether universal submission would probably be attended with greater natural evils than temporary insurrections, when privileges are invaded; and not, whether what tended in the whole to the public natural good was also morally good?" And if a divine command was alleged in favour of the doctrine of passive obedience, this would, no doubt, by its eternal sanctions cast the balance of natural good to its own side, and determine our election from interest; and yet our sense of the moral good in passive obedience, would still be founded upon some species of benevolence, such as gratitude toward the Deity and submission to his will to whom we are so much obliged. But I fancy those who believe the Deity to be good would not rashly allege such a command, unless they also asserted, that the thing commanded did tend more to the universal good, than the contrary, either by preventing the external evils of civil war, or by enuring men to patience, or some other quality which they apprehended necessary to their everlasting happiness. And were it not so, obedience might be recommended as an inglorious method of passive escaping a greater mischief, but could never have anything morally amiable in it.

But let us quit the disputes of the learned, on whom it may

be alleged custom and education have a powerful influence; and consider upon what grounds in common life actions are approved or condemned, vindicated or excused. We are universally ashamed to say an action is just, because it tends to my advantage, or to the advantage of the actor: and we as seldom condemn a beneficent kind action, because it is not advantageous to us, or to the actor. Blame and censure are founded on a tendency to public evil, or a principle of private malice in the agent, or neglect at least of the good of others; on inhumanity of temper, or at least such strong selfishness as makes the agent careless of the sufferings of others: and thus we blame and censure when the action no way affects ourselves. All the moving and persuasive vindications of actions, which may from some partial evil tendency appear evil, are taken from this, that they were necessary to some greater good which counterbalanced the evil; "severity toward a few, is compassion toward multitudes. — Transitory punishments are necessary for avoiding more durable evils. — Did not some suffer on such occasions, there would be no living for honest men," — and such like. And even when an action cannot be entirely justified, yet how greatly is the guilt extenuated, if we can allege, "that it was only the effect of inadvertence without malice, or of partial good nature, friendship, compassion, natural affection, or love of a party?" All these considerations show what is the universal foundation of our sense of moral good, or evil, viz. benevolence toward others on one hand, and malice, or even indolence, and unconcernedness about the apparent public evil on the other. And let it be here observed, that we are so far from imagining all men to act only from self-love, that we universally expect in others a regard for the public; and do not look upon the want of this, as barely the absence of moral good or virtue, but even as positively evil and hateful.

V. The actions which flow solely from self-love, and yet evidence no want of benevolence, having no hurtful effects upon others, seem perfectly indifferent in a moral sense, and neither raise the love or hatred of the observer. Our reason can indeed discover certain bounds within which we may not only act from self-love consistently with the good of the whole, but every mor-

tal's acting thus within these bounds for his own good is absolutely necessary for the good of the whole; and the want of such self-love would be universally pernicious. Hence he who pursues his own private good with an intention also to concur with that constitution which tends to the good of the whole; and much more he who promotes his own good, with a direct view of making himself more capable of serving God, or doing good to mankind, acts not only innocently, but also honourably and virtuously; for in both these cases a motive of benevolence concurs with self-love to excite him to the action. And thus a neglect of our own good, may be morally evil, and argue a want of benevolence toward the whole. But when self-love breaks over the bounds above-mentioned, and leads us into actions detrimental to others and to the whole, or makes us insensible of the generous kind affections, then it appears vicious, and is disapproved. So also, when upon any small injuries or sudden resentment or any weak superstitious suggestions, our benevolence becomes so faint as to let us entertain odious conceptions of men, or any part of them, without just ground, as if they were wholly evil or malicious, or as if they were a worse sort of beings than they really are; these conceptions must lead us into malevolent affections, or at least weaken our good ones, and make us really vicious.

VI. Here we must also observe that every moral agent justly considers himself as a part of this rational system, which may be useful to the whole; so that he may be in part an object of his own benevolence. Nay further, as we hinted above, he may see that the preservation of the system requires every one to be innocently solicitous about himself. Hence he may conclude that an action which brings greater evil to the agent than good to others, however it may evidence strong benevolence or a virtuous disposition in the agent, yet it must be founded upon a mistaken opinion of its tendency to public good, when it has no such tendency: so that a man who reasoned justly, and considered the whole, would not be led into it, were his benevolence ever so strong; nor would he recommend it to the practice of others, however he might acknowledge, that the detriment arising to

the agent from a kind action did evidence a strong disposition to virtue. Nay further, if any good was proposed to the pursuit of an agent, and he had a competitor in every respect only equal to himself; the highest benevolence possible would not lead a wise man to prefer another to himself, were there no ties of gratitude, or some other external circumstance to move him to yield to his competitor. A man surely of the strongest benevolence, may justly treat himself as he would do a third person, who was a competitor of equal merit with the other; and as his preferring one to another, in such a case, would argue no weakness of benevolence; so, no more would he evidence it by preferring himself to a man of only equal abilities.

Wherever a regard to myself tends as much to the good of the whole as regard to another; or where the evil to myself, is equal to the good obtained for another; though by acting in such cases for the good of another I really show a very amiable disposition; yet by acting in the contrary manner from regard to myself I evidence no evil disposition, nor any want of the most extensive benevolence; since the moment of good to the whole is in both cases exactly equal. And let it be here observed, that this does not supersede the necessity of liberality and gratuitous gifts, although in such actions the giver loses as much as the other receives; since the moment of good to any person, in any given case, is in a compound ratio of the quantity of the good itself, and the indigence of the person. Hence it appears that a gift may make a much greater addition to the happiness of the receiver, than the diminution it occasions in the happiness of the giver; and that the most useful and important gifts are those from the wealthy to the indigent. Gifts from equals are not useless neither, since they often increase the happiness of both, as they are strong evidences of mutual love; but gifts from the poor to the wealthy are really foolish, unless they be only little expressions of gratitude, which are also fruitful of joy on both sides; for these expressions of gratitude are really delightful and acceptable to the wealthy, if they have any humanity, and their acceptance of them is matter of joy to the poor giver.

In like manner, when an action does more harm to the agent

than good to the public; the doing it evidences an amiable and truly virtuous disposition in the agent, though 't is plain he acts upon a mistaken view of his duty. But if the private evil to the agent be so great, as to make him incapable at another time of promoting a public good of greater moment than what is attained by this action; the action may really be evil, so far as it evidences a prior neglect of a greater attainable public good for a smaller one; though at present this action also flows from a virtuous disposition.

VII. The moral beauty or deformity of actions is not altered by the moral qualities of the objects, any further than the qualities of the objects increase or diminish the benevolence of the action, or the public good intended by it. Thus benevolence toward the worst characters or the study of their good may be as amiable as any whatsoever; yea often more so than that toward the good, since it argues such a strong degree of benevolence as can surmount the greatest obstacle, the moral evil in the object. Hence the love of unjust enemies is counted among the highest virtues. Yet when our benevolence to the evil encourages them in their bad intentions, or makes them capable of mischief; this diminishes or destroys the beauty of the action, or even makes it evil, as it betrays a neglect of the good of others more valuable; beneficence toward whom would have tended more to the public good than that toward our favourites: but benevolence toward evil characters, which neither encourages them, nor enables them to do mischief, nor diverts our benevolence from persons more useful, has as much moral beauty as any whatsoever.

VIII. In comparing the moral qualities of actions, in order to regulate our election among various actions proposed, or to find which of them has the greatest moral excellency, we are led by our moral sense of virtue to judge thus: that in equal degrees of happiness expected to proceed from the action, the virtue is in proportion to the number of persons to whom happiness shall extend (and here the dignity or moral importance of men may compensate numbers); and in equal numbers, the virtue is as the quantity of the happiness or natural good; or that the virtue is in

compound ratio of the quantity of good, and number of enjoyers. In the same manner, the moral evil or vice, is as the degree of misery, and number of sufferers; so that, that action is best which procures the greatest happiness for the greatest numbers; and that worst, which in like manner occasions misery.

XI. To find a universal canon to compute the morality of any actions, with all their circumstances, when we judge of the actions done by ourselves, or by others, we must observe the following propositions or axioms.

1. The moral importance of any agent, or the quantity of public good produced by him, is in a compound ratio of his benevolence and abilities: or (by substituting the initial letters for the words, as M = moment of good, and μ = moment of evil) $M = B \times A$.

2. In like manner, the moment of private good, or interest produced by any person to himself, is in a compound ratio of his self-love, and abilities: or (substituting the initial letters) $I = S \times A$.

3. When in comparing the virtue of two actions, the abilities of the agents are equal; the moment of public good produced by them in like circumstances, is as the benevolence: or $M = B \times 1$.

4. When benevolence in two agents is equal, and other circumstances alike; the moment of public good is as the abilities: or $M = A \times 1$.

5. The virtue then of agents, or their benevolence, is always directly as the moment of good produced in like circumstances, and inversely as their abilities: or $B = \frac{M}{A}$.

. . . . . .

The applying a mathematical calculation to moral subjects, will appear perhaps at first extravagant and wild; but some corollaries, which are easily and certainly deduced below,[1] may show the conveniency of this attempt, if it could be further pursued. At present, we shall only draw this one, which seems the most joyful imaginable, even to the lowest rank of mankind, viz.: "that no external circumstances of fortune, no involuntary disadvantages, can exclude any mortal from the most heroic virtue." For how small soever the moment of public good be, which any one can accomplish, yet if his abilities are propor-

[1] See *Inquiry*, Sect. vii. Art. 8, 9 (§§ 180, 181).

tionably small, the quotient, which expresses the degree of virtue, may be as great as any whatsoever. Thus, not only the prince, the statesman, the general, are capable of true heroism, though these are the chief characters, whose fame is diffused through nations and ages; but when we find in an honest trader, the kind friend, the faithful prudent adviser, the charitable and hospitable neighbour, the tender husband and affectionate parent, the sedate yet cheerful companion, the generous assistant of merit, the cautious allayer of contention and debate, the promoter of love and good understanding among acquaintances; if we consider, that these were all the good offices which his station in the world gave him an opportunity of performing to mankind, we must judge this character really as amiable, as those, whose external splendor dazzles an injudicious world into an opinion, "that they are the only heroes in virtue."

DAVID HARTLEY
(1705-1757)

OBSERVATIONS ON MAN, HIS FRAME, HIS DUTY, AND HIS EXPECTATIONS*

PART I. INTRODUCTION

MAN consists of two parts, body and mind.

The first is subjected to our senses and inquiries, in the same manner as the other parts of the external material world.

The last is that substance, agent, principle, &c. to which we refer the sensations, ideas, pleasures, pains, and voluntary motions.

Sensations are those internal feelings of the mind, which arise from the impressions made by external objects upon the several parts of our bodies.

All our other internal feelings may be called *ideas*. Some of these appear to spring up in the mind of themselves, some are suggested by words, others arise in other ways. Many writers comprehend *sensations* under *ideas;* but I everywhere use these words in the senses here ascribed to them.

The ideas which resemble sensations, are called *ideas of sensation:* all the rest may therefore be called *intellectual ideas*.

It will appear in the course of these observations, that the *ideas of sensation* are the elements of which all the rest are compounded. Hence *ideas of sensation* may be termed *simple*, *intellectual* ones *complex*.

The *pleasures* and *pains* are comprehended under the sensations and ideas, as these are explained above. For all our pleasures and pains are internal feelings, and conversely, all our internal feelings seem to be attended with some degree either of *pleasure* or *pain*. However, I shall, for the most part, give the names of *pleasure* and *pain* only to such degrees as are consider-

* London, 1749; 2d ed. (with Life), 1791; 6th rev. ed., 1834.

able; referring all low evanescent ones to the head of *mere sensations* and *ideas*.

The pleasures and pains may be ranged under seven general classes; viz.:

1. Sensation;
2. Imagination;
3. Ambition;
4. Self-Interest;
5. Sympathy;
6. Theopathy; and,
7. The Moral Sense;

according as they arise from:

1. The impressions made on the external senses;
2. Natural or artificial beauty or deformity;
3. The opinions of others concerning us;
4. Our possession or want of the means of happiness, and security from, or subjection to, the hazards of misery;
5. The pleasures and pains of our fellow-creatures;
6. The affections excited in us by the contemplation of the Deity; or
7. Moral beauty and deformity.

CHAPTER I. SECTION II. THE FORMATION OF COMPLEX IDEAS BY ASSOCIATION

Prop. XII. — Simple Ideas will run into Complex Ones, by Means of Association

In order to explain and prove this proposition, it will be requisite to give some previous account of the manner in which simple ideas of sensation may be associated together.

Case 1. Let the sensation *A* be often associated with each of the sensations *B*, *C*, *D*, etc., *i. e.* at certain times with *B*, at certain other times with *C*, etc., it is evident, from the tenth proposition, that *A*, impressed alone, will, at last, raise *b*, *c*, *d*, etc., all together, *i. e.* associate them with one another, provided they

belong to different regions of the medullary substance; for if any two, or more, belong to the same region, since they cannot exist together in their distinct forms, *A* will raise something intermediate between them.

Case 2. If the sensations *A*, *B*, *C*, *D*, etc., be associated together, according to various combinations of twos, or even threes, fours, etc., then will *A* raise *b*, *c*, *d*, etc., also *B* raise *a*, *c*, *d*, etc., as in case the first.

It may happen, indeed, in both cases, that *A* may raise a particular miniature, as *b*, preferably to any of the rest, from its being more associated with *B*, from the novelty of the impression of *B*, from a tendency in the medullary substance to favour *b*, etc., and in like manner, that *b*, may raise *c* or *d* preferably to the rest. However, all this will be over-ruled, at last, by the occurrency of the associations; so that any one of the sensations will excite the ideas of the rest at the same instant, *i. e.* associate them together.

Case 3. Let *A*, *B*, *C*, *D*, etc., represent successive impressions, it follows from the tenth and eleventh propositions, that *A* will raise *b*, *c*, *d*, etc., *B* raise *c*, *d*, etc. And though the ideas do not, in this case, rise precisely at the same instant, yet they come nearer together than the sensations themselves did in their original impression; so that these ideas are associated almost synchronically at last, and successively from the first. The ideas come nearer to one another than the sensations, on account of their diminutive nature, by which all that appertains to them is contracted. And this seems to be as agreeable to observation as to theory.

Case 4. All compound impressions $A+B+C+D$, etc., after sufficient repetition leave compound miniatures $a+b+c+d$, etc., which recur every now and then from slight causes, as well such as depend on association, as some which are different from it. Now, in these recurrences of compound miniatures, the parts are farther associated, and approach perpetually nearer to each other, agreeably to what was just now observed; *i. e.* the association becomes perpetually more close and intimate.

Case 5. When the ideas *a*, *b*, *c*, *d*, etc., have been sufficiently

associated in any one or more of the foregoing ways, if we suppose any single idea of these, *a* for instance, to be raised by the tendency of the medullary substance that way, by the association of *A* with a foreign sensation or idea *X* or *x*, etc., this idea *a*, thus raised, will frequently bring in all the rest, *b*, *c*, *d*, etc., and so associate all of them together still farther.

And upon the whole, it may appear to the reader, that the simple ideas of sensation must run into clusters and combinations, by association; and that each of these will, at last, coalesce into one complex idea, by the approach and commixture of the several compounding parts.

It appears also from observation, that many of our intellectual ideas, such as those that belong to the heads of beauty, honour, moral qualities, etc., are in fact, thus composed of parts, which, by degrees, coalesce into one complex idea.

. . . . . .

CHAPTER IV. SECTION VI. THE PLEASURES AND PAINS OF THE MORAL SENSE

Prop. XCIX. To examine how far the Pleasures and Pains of the Moral Sense are Agreeable to the Foregoing Theory

There are certain tempers of mind, with the actions flowing from them, as of piety, humility, resignation, gratitude, etc., towards God; of benevolence, charity, generosity, compassion, humility, gratitude, etc., towards men; of temperance, patience, contentment, etc., in respect of a person's own private enjoyments or sufferings; which when he believes himself to be possessed of, and reflects upon, a pleasing consciousness and self-approbation rise up in his mind, exclusively of any direct explicit consideration of advantage likely to accrue to himself, from his possession of these good qualities. In like manner the view of them in others raises up a disinterested love and esteem for these others. And the opposite qualities of impiety, profaneness, uncharitableness, resentment, cruelty, envy, ingratitude, intemper-

ance, lewdness, selfishness, etc., are attended with the condemnation both of ourselves and others. This is, in general, the state of the case; but there are many particular differences, according to the particular education, temper, profession, sex, etc., of each person.

Or, which is the same thing, the secondary ideas belonging to virtue and vice, duty and sin, innocence and guilt, merit and demerit, right and wrong, moral good and moral evil, just and unjust, fit and unfit, obligation and prohibition, etc., in one man, bear a great resemblance to those belonging to the same words in another, or to the corresponding words, if they have different languages; and yet do not exactly coincide, but differ more or less, according to the difference in education, temper, etc.

Now both this general resemblance, and these particular differences, in our ideas, and consequent approbation or disapprobation, seem to admit of an analysis and explanation from the following particulars.

First, Children are, for the most part, instructed in the difference and opposition between virtue and vice, duty and sin, etc., and have some general descriptions of the virtues and vices inculcated upon them. They are told, that the first are good, pleasant, beautiful, noble, fit, worthy of praise and reward, etc.; the last odious, painful, shameful, worthy of punishment, etc.; so that the pleasing and displeasing associations previously annexed to these words in their minds, are, by means of that confidence which they place in their superiors, transferred upon the virtues and vices respectively. And the mutual intercourses of life have the same effect in a less degree, with respect to adults, and those children who receive little or no instruction from their parents or superiors. Virtue is in general approved, and set off by all the encomiums, and honourable appellations, that any other thing admits of, and vice loaded with censures and reproaches of all kinds, in all good conversation and books. And this happens oftener than the contrary, even in bad ones; so that as far as men are influenced in their judgments by those of others, the balance is, upon the whole, on the side of virtue.

Secondly, There are many immediate good consequences,

which attend upon virtue, as many ill ones do upon vice, and that during our whole progress through life. Sensuality and intemperance subject men to diseases and pain, to shame, deformity, filthiness, terrors, and anxieties; whereas temperance is attended with ease of body, freedom of spirits, the capacity of being pleased with the objects of pleasure, the good opinion of others, the perfection of the senses, and of the faculties, bodily and mental, long life, plenty, etc. Anger, malice, envy, bring upon us the returns of anger, malice, envy, from others, with injuries, reproaches, fears, and perpetual disquietude; and, in like manner, good-will, generosity, compassion, are rewarded with returns of the same, with the pleasures of sociality and friendship, with good offices, and with the highest encomiums. And when a person becomes properly qualified, by the previous love of his neighbour, to love God, to hope and trust in him, and to worship him in any measure as he ought to do, this affords the sincerest joy and comfort; as, on the contrary, the neglect of God, or practical atheism, the murmuring against the course of providence, sceptical unsettledness, and fool-hardy impiety, are evidently attended with great anxieties, gloominess, and distraction, as long as there are any traces of morality or religion left upon men's minds. Now these pleasures and pains, by often recurring in various combinations, and by being variously transferred upon each other, from the great affinity between the several virtues, and their rewards, with each other; also between the several vices, and their punishments, with each other; will at last beget in us a general, mixed, pleasing idea and consciousness, when we reflect upon our own virtuous affections or actions; a sense of guilt, and an anxiety, when we reflect on the contrary; and also raise in us the love and esteem of virtue, and the hatred of vice in others.

Thirdly, The many benefits which we receive immediately from, or which have some evident, though distant, connexion with the piety, benevolence, and temperance of others; also the contrary mischiefs from their vices; lead us first to the love and hatred of the persons themselves by association, as explained under the head of sympathy, and then by farther associations to

the love and hatred of the virtues and vices, considered abstractedly, and without any regard to our own interest; and that whether we view them in ourselves or others. As our love and esteem for virtue in others is much increased by the pleasing consciousness, which our own practice of it affords to ourselves, so the pleasure of this consciousness is much increased by our love of virtue in others.

Fourthly, The great suitableness of all the virtues to each other, and to the beauty, order, and perfection of the world, animate and inanimate, impresses a very lovely character upon virtue; and the contrary self-contradiction, deformity, and mischievous tendency of vice, render it odious, and matter of abhorrence to all persons that reflect upon these things; and beget a language of this kind, which is borrowed, in great measure, from the pleasures and pains of imagination, and applied with a peculiar force and fitness to this subject from its great importance.

Fifthly, The hopes and fears which arise from the consideration of a future state, are themselves pleasures and pains of a high nature. When, therefore, a sufficient foundation has been laid by a practical belief of religion, natural and revealed, by the frequent view of, and meditation upon, death, by the loss of departed friends, by bodily pains, by worldly disappointments and afflictions, for forming strong associations of the pleasures of these hopes with duty, and the pains of these fears with sin, the reiterated impressions of those associations will at last make duty itself a pleasure, and convert sin into a pain, giving a lustre and deformity respectively to all their appellations; and that without any express recollection of the hopes and fears of another world, just as in other cases of association.

Sixthly, All meditations upon God, who is the inexhaustible fountain, and infinite abyss, of all perfection, both natural and moral; also all the kinds of prayer, *i. e.*, all the ways of expressing our love, hope, trust, resignation, gratitude, reverence, fear, desire, etc., towards him; transfer, by association, all the perfection, greatness, and gloriousness of his natural attributes upon his moral ones, *i. e.*, upon moral rectitude. We shall by this means learn to be merciful, holy, and perfect, because God is so;

and to love mercy, holiness, and perfection, wherever we see them.

And thus we may perceive, that all the pleasures and pains of sensation, imagination, ambition, self-interest, sympathy, and theopathy, as far as they are consistent with one another, with the frame of our natures, and with the course of the world, beget in us a moral sense, and lead us to the love and approbation of virtue, and to the fear, hatred, and abhorrence of vice. This moral sense therefore carries its own authority with it, inasmuch as it is the sum total of all the rest, and the ultimate result from them; and employs the force and authority of the whole nature of man against any particular part of it, that rebels against the determinations and commands of the conscience or moral judgment.

It appears also, that the moral sense carries us perpetually to the pure love of God, as our highest and ultimate perfection, our end, centre, and only resting-place, to which yet we can never attain.

When the moral sense is advanced to considerable perfection, a person may be made to love and hate, merely because he ought; *i. e.* the pleasures of moral beauty and rectitude, and the pains of moral deformity and unfitness, may be transferred, and made to coalesce, almost instantaneously.

Scrupulosity may be considered as a degeneration of the moral sense, resembling that by which the fear of God passes into superstition; for it arises like this, from a consciousness of guilt, explicit or implicit, from bodily indisposition, and from an erroneous method of reasoning. It has also a most intimate connexion with superstition (just as moral rectitude has with the true love and fear of God): and, like superstition, it is, in many cases, observed to work its own cure by rectifying what is amiss; and so by degrees removing both the explicit and implicit consciousness of guilt. It seems also, that in this imperfect state men seldom arrive at any great degree of correctness in their actions without some previous scrupulosity, by which they may be led to estimate the nature and consequences of affections and actions with care, impartiality, and exactness.

The moral sense or judgment here spoken of is sometimes considered as an instinct, sometimes as determinations of the mind, grounded on the eternal reasons and relations of things. Those who maintain either of these opinions may, perhaps, explain them so as to be consistent with the foregoing analysis of the moral sense from association. But if by instinct be meant a disposition communicated to the brain, and in consequence of this, to the mind, or to the mind alone, so as to be quite independent of association; and by a moral instinct, such a disposition producing in us moral judgments concerning affections and actions; it will be necessary, in order to support the opinion of a moral instinct, to produce instances, where moral judgments arise in us, independently of prior associations determining thereto.

In like manner, if by founding the morality of actions, and our judgment concerning this morality, on the eternal reasons and relations of things, be meant, that the reasons drawn from the relations of things, by which the morality or immorality of certain actions is commonly proved, and which, with the relations, are called eternal, from their appearing the same, or nearly the same, to the mind at all times, would determine the mind to form the corresponding moral judgment independently of prior associations, this ought also to be proved by the allegation of proper instances. To me it appears, that the instances are, as far as we can judge of them, of an opposite nature, and favour the deduction of all our moral judgments, approbations, and disapprobations, from association alone. However, some associations are formed so early, repeated so often, rivetted so strong, and have so close a connexion with the common nature of man, and the events of life which happen to all, as, in a popular way of speaking, to claim the appellation of original and natural dispositions; and to appear like instincts when compared with dispositions evidently factitious; also like axioms, and intuitive propositions, eternally true according to the usual phrase, when compared with moral reasonings of a compound kind. But I have endeavoured to show in these papers, that all reasoning, as well as affection, is the mere result of association.

DAVID HUME

(1711–1766)

AN ENQUIRY CONCERNING THE PRINCIPLES OF MORALS*

SECTION I. OF THE GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF MORALS

. . . Though this question, concerning the general principles of morals, be curious and important, it is needless for us, at present, to employ farther care in our researches concerning it. For if we can be so happy, in the course of this enquiry, as to discover the true origin of morals, it will then easily appear how far either sentiment or reason enters into all determinations of this nature.

In order to attain this purpose, we shall endeavour to follow a very simple method: we shall analyse that complication of mental qualities, which form what, in common life, we call Personal Merit: we shall consider every attribute of the mind, which renders a man an object either of esteem and affection, or of hatred and contempt; every habit or sentiment or faculty, which, if ascribed to any person, implies either praise or blame, and may enter into any panegyric or satire of his character and manners. The quick sensibility, which, on this head, is so universal among mankind, gives a philosopher sufficient assurance, that he can never be considerably mistaken in framing the catalogue, or incur any danger of misplacing the objects of his contemplation: he needs only enter into his own breast for a moment, and consider whether or not he should desire to have this or that quality ascribed to him, and whether such or such an imputation would proceed from a friend or an enemy. The very nature of language guides us almost infallibly in forming a judgement of this nature; and as every tongue possesses one set of words which are taken in a good sense, and another in the opposite, the least acquain-

* London, 1751; *id.*, Essays, *ib.*, 1898, vol. ii.

tance with the idiom suffices, without any reasoning, to direct us in collecting and arranging the estimable or blameable qualities of men. The only object of reasoning is to discover the circumstances on both sides, which are common to these qualities; to observe that particular in which the estimable qualities agree on the one hand, and the blameable on the other; and thence to reach the foundation of ethics, and find those universal principles, from which all censure or approbation is ultimately derived. As this is a question of fact, not of abstract science, we can only expect success, by following the experimental method, and deducing general maxims from a comparison of particular instances. The other scientific method, where a general abstract principle is first established, and is afterwards branched out into a variety of inferences and conclusions, may be more perfect in itself, but suits less the imperfection of human nature, and is a common source of illusion and mistake in this as well as in other subjects. Men are not cured of their passion for hypotheses and systems in natural philosophy, and will hearken to no arguments but those which are derived from experience. It is full time they should attempt a like reformation in all moral disquisitions; and reject every system of ethics, however subtle or ingenious, which is not founded on fact and observation.

We shall begin our enquiry on this head by the consideration of the social virtues, Benevolence and Justice. The explication of them will probably give us an opening by which the others may be accounted for.

SECTION II. OF BENEVOLENCE

Part I

It may be esteemed, perhaps, a superfluous task to prove, that the benevolent or softer affections are estimable; and wherever they appear, engage the approbation and good-will of mankind. The epithets *sociable*, *good-natured*, *humane*, *merciful*, *grateful*, *friendly*, *generous*, *beneficent*, or their equivalents, are known in all languages, and universally express the highest merit which

human nature is capable of attaining. Where these amiable qualities are attended with birth and power and eminent abilities, and display themselves in the good government or useful instruction of mankind, they seem even to raise the possessors of them above the rank of *human nature*, and make them approach in some measure to the divine. Exalted capacity, undaunted courage, prosperous success; these may only expose a hero or politician to the envy and ill-will of the public: but as soon as the praises are added of humane and beneficent; when instances are displayed of lenity, tenderness, or friendship, envy itself is silent, or joins the general voice of approbation and applause.

When Pericles, the great Athenian statesman and general, was on his death-bed, his surrounding friends, deeming him now insensible, began to indulge their sorrow for their expiring patron, by enumerating his great qualities and successes, his conquests and victories, the unusual length of his administration, and his nine trophies erected over the enemies of the republic. *You forget*, cries the dying hero, who had heard all, *you forget the most eminent of my praises, while you dwell so much on those vulgar advantages, in which fortune had a principal share. You have not observed that no citizen has ever yet worn mourning on my account.*[1]

In men of more ordinary talents and capacity, the social virtues become, if possible, still more essentially requisite; there being nothing eminent, in that case, to compensate for the want of them, or preserve the person from our severest hatred as well as contempt. A high ambition, an elevated courage, is apt, says Cicero, in less perfect characters, to degenerate into a turbulent ferocity. The more social and softer virtues are there chiefly to be regarded. These are always good and amiable.[2]

The principal advantage, which Juvenal discovers in the extensive capacity of the human species, is that it renders our benevolence also more extensive, and gives us larger opportunities of spreading our kindly influence than what are indulged to the inferior creation.[3] It must, indeed, be confessed, that by doing

[1] Plut. *In Periclen.* [2] Cic. *De Officiis*, lib. i.
[3] *Sat.* xv. 139 *et seq.*

good only, can a man truly enjoy the advantages of being eminent. His exalted station of itself but the more exposes him to danger and tempest. His sole prerogative is to afford shelter to inferiors, who repose themselves under his cover and protection.

But I forget, that it is not my present business to recommend generosity and benevolence, or to paint, in their true colours, all the genuine charms of the social virtues. These, indeed, sufficiently engage every heart, on the first apprehension of them; and it is difficult to abstain from some sally of panegyric, as often as they occur in discourse or reasoning. But our object here being more the speculative, than the practical part of morals, it will suffice to remark (what will readily, I believe, be allowed) that no qualities are more entitled to the general good-will and approbation of mankind than beneficence and humanity, friendship and gratitude, natural affection and public spirit, or whatever proceeds from a tender sympathy with others, and a generous concern for our kind and species. These wherever they appear, seem to transfuse themselves, in a manner, into each beholder, and to call forth, in their own behalf, the same favourable and affectionate sentiments, which they exert on all around.

Part II

We may observe that, in displaying the praises of any humane, beneficent man, there is one circumstance which never fails to be amply insisted on, namely, the happiness and satisfaction, derived to society from his intercourse and good offices. To his parents, we are apt to say, he endears himself by his pious attachment and duteous care still more than by the connexions of nature. His children never feel his authority, but when employed for their advantage. With him, the ties of love are consolidated by beneficence and friendship. The ties of friendship approach, in a fond observance of each obliging office, to those of love and inclination. His domestics and dependants have in him a sure resource; and no longer dread the power of fortune, but so far as she exercises it over him. From him the hungry receive food, the

naked clothing, the ignorant and slothful skill and industry. Like the sun, an inferior minister of providence, he cheers, invigorates, and sustains the surrounding world.

If confined to private life, the sphere of his activity is narrower; but his influence is all benign and gentle. If exalted into a higher station, mankind and posterity reap the fruit of his labours.

As these topics of praise never fail to be employed, and with success, where we would inspire esteem for any one; may it not thence be concluded, that the utility, resulting from the social virtues, forms, at least, a *part* of their merit, and is one source of that approbation and regard so universally paid to them?

Then we recommend even an animal or a plant as *useful* and *beneficial*, we give it an applause and recommendation suited to its nature. As, on the other hand, reflection on the baneful influence of any of these inferior beings always inspires us with the sentiment of aversion. The eye is pleased with the prospect of corn-fields and loaded vineyards; horses grazing, and flocks pasturing: but flies the view of briars and brambles, affording shelter to wolves and serpents.

A machine, a piece of furniture, a vestment, a house well contrived for use and conveniency, is so far beautiful, and is contemplated with pleasure and approbation. An experienced eye is here sensible to many excellencies, which escape persons ignorant and uninstructed.

Can anything stronger be said in praise of a profession, such as merchandize or manufacture, than to observe the advantages which it procures to society; and is not a monk and inquisitor enraged when we treat his order as useless or pernicious to mankind?

The historian exults in displaying the benefit arising from his labours. The writer of romance alleviates or denies the bad consequences ascribed to his manner of composition.

In general, what praise is implied in the simple epithet *useful!* What reproach in the contrary!

Your Gods, says Cicero,[1] in opposition to the Epicureans,

[1] *De Nat. Deor.*, lib. i.

cannot justly claim any worship or adoration, with whatever imaginary perfections you may suppose them endowed. They are totally useless and inactive. Even the Egyptians, whom you so much ridicule, never consecrated any animal but on account of its utility.

The sceptics assert,[1] though absurdly, that the origin of all religious worship was derived from the utility of inanimate objects, as the sun and moon, to the support and well-being of mankind. This is also the common reason assigned by historians, for the deification of eminent heroes and legislators.

To plant a tree, to cultivate a field, to beget children; meritorious acts, according to the religion of Zoroaster.

In all determinations of morality, this circumstance of public utility is ever principally in view; and wherever disputes arise, either in philosophy or common life, concerning the bounds of duty, the question cannot, by any means, be decided with greater certainty, than by ascertaining, on any side, the true interests of mankind. If any false opinion, embraced from appearances, has been found to prevail; as soon as farther experience and sounder reasoning have given us juster notions of human affairs, we retract our first sentiment, and adjust anew the boundaries of moral good and evil.

Giving alms to common beggars is naturally praised; because it seems to carry relief to the distressed and indigent: but when we observe the encouragement thence arising to idleness and debauchery, we regard that species of charity rather as a weakness than a virtue.

Upon the whole, then, it seems undeniable, *that* nothing can bestow more merit on any human creature than the sentiment of benevolence in an eminent degree; and *that* a *part*, at least, of its merit arises from its tendency to promote the interests of our species, and bestow happiness on human society. We carry our view into the salutary consequences of such a character and disposition; and whatever has so benign an influence, and forwards so desirable an end, is beheld with complacency and pleasure. The social virtues are never regarded without their

[1] *Sext. Emp. adversus Math.*, lib. viii.

beneficial tendencies, nor viewed as barren and unfruitful. The happiness of mankind, the order of society, the harmony of families, the mutual support of friends, are always considered as the result of their gentle dominion over the breasts of men.

SECTION III. OF JUSTICE

PART I

That Justice is useful to society, and consequently that *part* of its merit, at least, must arise from that consideration, it would be a superfluous undertaking to prove. That public utility is the *sole* origin of justice, and that reflections on the beneficial consequences of this virtue are the *sole* foundation of its merit; this proposition, being more curious and important, will better deserve our examination and enquiry.

Let us suppose that nature has bestowed on the human race such profuse *abundance* of all *external* conveniencies, that, without any uncertainty in the event, without any care or industry on our part, every individual finds himself fully provided with whatever his most voracious appetites can want, or luxurious imagination wish or desire. His natural beauty, we shall suppose, surpasses all acquired ornaments: the perpetual clemency of the seasons renders useless all clothes or covering: the raw herbage affords him the most delicious fare; the clear fountain, the richest beverage. No laborious occupation required: no tillage: no navigation. Music, poetry, and contemplation form his sole business: conversation, mirth, and friendship his sole amusement.

It seems evident that, in such a happy state, every other social virtue would flourish, and receive tenfold increase; but the cautious, jealous virtue of justice would never once have been dreamed of. For what purpose make a partition of goods, where every one has already more than enough? Why give rise to property, where there cannot possibly be any injury? Why call this object *mine*, when upon the seizing of it by another, I need but stretch out my hand to possess myself of what is equally

valuable? Justice, in that case, being totally useless, would be an idle ceremonial, and could never possibly have place in the catalogue of virtues.

We see, even in the present necessitous condition of mankind, that, wherever any benefit is bestowed by nature in an unlimited abundance, we leave it always in common among the whole human race, and make no subdivisions of right and property. Water and air, though the most necessary of all objects, are not challenged as the property of individuals; nor can any man commit injustice by the most lavish use and enjoyment of these blessings. In fertile extensive countries, with few inhabitants, land is regarded on the same footing. And no topic is so much insisted on by those, who defend the liberty of the seas, as the unexhausted use of them in navigation. Were the advantages, procured by navigation, as inexhaustible, these reasoners had never had any adversaries to refute; nor had any claims ever been advanced of a separate, exclusive dominion over the ocean.

It may happen, in some countries, at some periods, that there be established a property in water, none in land; [1] if the latter be in greater abundance than can be used by the inhabitants, and the former be found, with difficulty, and in very small quantities.

Again; suppose, that, though the necessities of the human race continue the same as at present, yet the mind is so enlarged, and so replete with friendship and generosity, that every man has the utmost tenderness for every man, and feels no more concern for his own interest than for that of his fellows; it seems evident, that the use of justice would, in this case, be suspended by such an extensive benevolence, nor would the divisions and barriers of property and obligation have ever been thought of. Why should I bind another, by a deed or promise, to do me any good office, when I know that he is already prompted, by the strongest inclination, to seek my happiness, and would, of himself, perform the desired service; except the hurt, he thereby receives, be greater than the benefit accruing to me? in which case, he knows,

[1] Genesis, xiii and xxi.

that, from my innate humanity and friendship, I should be the first to oppose myself to his imprudent generosity. Why raise land-marks between my neighbour's field and mine, when my heart has made no division between our interests; but shares all his joys and sorrows with the same force and vivacity as if originally my own? Every man, upon this supposition, being a second self to another, would trust all his interests to the discretion of every man; without jealousy, without partition, without distinction. And the whole human race would form only one family; where all would lie in common, and be used freely, without regard to property; but cautiously too, with as entire regard to the necessities of each individual, as if our own interests were most intimately concerned.

In the present disposition of the human heart, it would, perhaps, be difficult to find complete instances of such enlarged affections; but still we may observe, that the case of families approaches towards it; and the stronger the mutual benevolence is among the individuals, the nearer it approaches; till all distinction of property be, in a great measure, lost and confounded among them. Between married persons, the cement of friendship is by the laws supposed so strong as to abolish all division of possessions; and has often, in reality, the force ascribed to it. And it is observable, that, during the ardour of new enthusiasms, when every principle is inflamed into extravagance, the community of goods has frequently been attempted; and nothing but experience of its inconveniencies, from the returning or disguised selfishness of men, could make the imprudent fanatics adopt anew the ideas of justice and of separate property. So true is it, that this virtue derives its existence entirely from its necessary *use* to the intercourse and social state of mankind.

To make this truth more evident, let us reverse the foregoing suppositions; and carrying everything to the opposite extreme, consider what would be the effect of these new situations. Suppose a society to fall into such want of all common necessaries, that the utmost frugality and industry cannot preserve the greater number from perishing, and the whole from extreme misery; it will readily, I believe, be admitted, that the strict laws

of justice are suspended, in such a pressing emergence, and give place to the stronger motives of necessity and self-preservation. Is it any crime, after a shipwreck, to seize whatever means or instrument of safety one can lay hold of, without regard to former limitations of property? Or if a city besieged were perishing with hunger; can we imagine, that men will see any means of preservation before them, and lose their lives, from a scrupulous regard to what, in other situations, would be the rules of equity and justice? The use and tendency of that virtue is to procure happiness and security, by preserving order in society: but where the society is ready to perish from extreme necessity, no greater evil can be dreaded from violence and injustice; and every man may now provide for himself by all the means which prudence can dictate, or humanity permit. The public, even in less urgent necessities, opens granaries, without the consent of proprietors; as justly supposing, that the authority of magistracy may, consistent with equity, extend so far: but were any number of men to assemble, without the tie of laws or civil jurisdiction; would an equal partition of bread in a famine, though effected by power and even violence, be regarded as criminal or injurious?

Suppose likewise, that it should be a virtuous man's fate to fall into the society of ruffians, remote from the protection of laws and government; what conduct must he embrace in that melancholy situation? He sees such a desperate rapaciousness prevail; such a disregard to equity, such contempt of order, such stupid blindness to future consequences, as must immediately have the most tragical conclusion, and must terminate in destruction to the greater number, and in a total dissolution of society to the rest. He, meanwhile, can have no other expedient than to arm himself, to whomever the sword he seizes, or the buckler, may belong: To make provision of all means of defence and security: And his particular regard to justice being no longer of use to his own safety or that of others, he must consult the dictates of self-preservation alone, without concern for those who no longer merit his care and attention.

When any man, even in political society, renders himself by

his crimes, obnoxious to the public, he is punished by the laws in his goods and person; that is, the ordinary rules of justice are, with regard to him, suspended for a moment, and it becomes equitable to inflict on him, for the *benefit* of society, what otherwise he could not suffer without wrong or injury.

The rage and violence of public war; what is it but a suspension of justice among the warring parties, who perceive, that this virtue is now no longer of any *use* or advantage to them? The laws of war, which then succeed to those of equity and justice, are rules calculated for the *advantage* and *utility* of that particular state, in which men are now placed. And were a civilized nation engaged with barbarians, who observed no rules even of war, the former must also suspend their observance of them, where they no longer serve to any purpose; and must render every action or rencounter as bloody and pernicious as possible to the first aggressors.

Thus, the rules of equity or justice depend entirely on the particular state and condition in which men are placed, and owe their origin and existence to that utility, which results to the public from their strict and regular observance. Reverse, in any considerable circumstance, the condition of men: Produce extreme abundance or extreme necessity: Implant in the human breast perfect moderation and humanity, or perfect rapaciousness and malice: By rendering justice totally *useless*, you thereby totally destroy its essense, and suspend its obligation upon mankind.

The common situation of society is a medium amidst all these extremes. We are naturally partial to ourselves, and to our friends; but are capable of learning the advantage resulting from a more equitable conduct. Few enjoyments are given us from the open and liberal hand of nature; but by art, labour, and industry, we can extract them in great abundance. Hence the ideas of property become necessary in all civil society: Hence justice derives its usefulness to the public: And hence alone arises its merit and moral obligation.

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SECTION IX. PERSONAL MERIT

It may justly appear surprising that any man in so late an age, should find it requisite to prove, by elaborate reasoning, that Personal Merit consists altogether in the possession of mental qualities, *useful* or *agreeable* to the *person himself* or to *others*. It might be expected that this principle would have occurred even to the first rude, unpractised enquirers concerning morals, and been received from its own evidence, without any argument or disputation. Whatever is valuable in any kind, so naturally classes itself under the division of *useful* or *agreeable*, the *utile* or the *dulce*, that it is not easy to imagine why we should ever seek further, or consider the question as a matter of nice research or enquiry. And as everything useful or agreeable must possess these qualities with regard either to the *person himself* or to *others*, the complete delineation or description of merit seems to be performed as naturally as a shadow is cast by the sun, or an image is reflected upon water. If the ground, on which the shadow is cast, be not broken and uneven; nor the surface from which the image is reflected, disturbed and confused; a just figure is immediately presented, without any art or attention. And it seems a reasonable presumption, that systems and hypotheses have perverted our natural understanding, when a theory, so simple and obvious, could so long have escaped the most elaborate examination.

But however the case may have fared with philosophy, in common life these principles are still implicitly maintained; nor is any other topic of praise or blame ever recurred to, when we employ any panegyric or satire, any applause or censure of human action and behaviour. If we observe men, in every intercourse of business or pleasure, in every discourse and conversation, we shall find them nowhere, except in the schools, at any loss upon this subject. What so natural, for instance, as the following dialogue? You are very happy, we shall suppose one to say, addressing himself to another, that you have given your daughter to Cleanthes. He is a man of honour and humanity.

Every one, who has any intercourse with him, is sure of *fair* and *kind* treatment.[1] I congratulate you too, says another, on the promising expectations of this son-in-law; whose assiduous application to the study of the laws, whose quick penetration and early knowledge both of men and business, prognosticate the greatest honours and advancement.[2] You surprise me, replies a third, when you talk of Cleanthes as a man of business and application. I met him lately in a circle of the gayest company, and he was the very life and soul of our conversation: so much wit with good manners, so much gallantry without affectation; so much ingenious knowledge so genteelly delivered, I have never before observed in any one.[3] You would admire him still more, says a fourth, if you knew him more familiarly. That cheerfulness, which you might remark in him, is not a sudden flash struck out by company: it runs through the whole tenor of his life, and preserves a perpetual serenity on his countenance, and tranquillity in his soul. He has met with severe trials, misfortunes as well as dangers; and by his greatness of mind, was still superior to all of them.[4] The image, gentlemen, which you have here delineated of Cleanthes, cried I, is that of accomplished merit. Each of you has given a stroke of the pencil to his figure; and you have unawares exceeded all the pictures drawn by Gratian or Castiglione. A philosopher might select this character as a model of perfect virtue.

And as every quality which is useful or agreeable to ourselves or others is, in common life, allowed to be a part of personal merit; so no other will ever be received, where men judge of things by their natural, unprejudiced reason, without the delusive glosses of superstition and false religion. Celibacy, fasting, penance, mortification, self-denial, humility, silence, solitude, and the whole train of monkish virtues; for what reason are they everywhere rejected by men of sense, but because they serve to no manner of purpose; neither advance a man's

[1] Qualities useful to others.
[2] Qualities useful to the person himself.
[3] Qualities immediately agreeable to others.
[4] Qualities immediately agreeable to the person himself.

fortune in the world, nor render him a more valuable member of society; neither qualify him for the entertainment of company, nor increase his power of self-enjoyment? We observe, on the contrary, that they cross all these desirable ends; stupefy the understanding and harden the heart, obscure the fancy and sour the temper. We justly, therefore, transfer them to the opposite column, and place them in the catalogue of vices; nor has any superstition force sufficient among men of the world, to pervert entirely these natural sentiments. A gloomy, hair-brained enthusiast, after his death, may have a place in the calendar; but will scarcely ever be admitted, when alive, into intimacy and society, except by those who are as delirious and dismal as himself.

It seems a happiness in the present theory, that it enters not into that vulgar dispute concerning the *degrees* of benevolence or self-love, which prevail in human nature; a dispute which is never likely to have any issue, both because men, who have taken part, are not easily convinced, and because the phenomena, which can be produced on either side, are so dispersed, so uncertain, and subject to so many interpretations, that it is scarcely possible accurately to compare them, or draw from them any determinate inference or conclusion. It is sufficient for our present purpose, if it be allowed, what surely, without the greatest absurdity cannot be disputed, that there is some benevolence, however small, infused into our bosom; some spark of friendship for human kind; some particle of the dove kneaded into our frame, along with the elements of the wolf and serpent. Let these generous sentiments be supposed ever so weak; let them be insufficient to move even a hand or finger of our body, they must still direct the determinations of our mind, and where everything else is equal, produce a cool preference of what is useful and serviceable to mankind, above what is pernicious and dangerous. A *moral distinction*, therefore, immediately arises; a general sentiment of blame and approbation; a tendency, however faint, to the objects of the one, and a proportionable aversion to those of the other. Nor will those reasoners, who so earnestly maintain the predominant selfishness of human kind,

be any wise scandalized at hearing of the weak sentiments of virtue implanted in our nature. On the contrary, they are found as ready to maintain the one tenet as the other; and their spirit of satire (for such it appears, rather than of corruption) naturally gives rise to both opinions; which have, indeed, a great and almost an indissoluble connexion together.

Avarice, ambition, vanity, and all passions vulgarly, though improperly, comprised under the denomination of *self-love*, are here excluded from our theory concerning the origin of morals, not because they are too weak, but because they have not a proper direction for that purpose. The notion of morals implies some sentiment common to all mankind, which recommends the same object to general approbation, and makes every man, or most men, agree in the same opinion or decision concerning it. It also implies some sentiment, so universal and comprehensive as to extend to all mankind, and render the actions and conduct, even of the persons the most remote, an object of applause or censure, according as they agree or disagree with that rule of right which is established. These two requisite circumstances belong alone to the sentiment of humanity here insisted on. The other passions produce in every breast, many strong sentiments of desire and aversion, affection and hatred; but these neither are felt so much in common, nor are so comprehensive, as to be the foundation of any general system and established theory of blame or approbation.

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But, that we may accommodate matters, and remove if possible every difficulty, let us allow all these reasonings to be false. Let us allow that, when we resolve the pleasure, which arises from views of utility, into the sentiments of humanity and sympathy, we have embraced a wrong hypothesis. Let us confess it necessary to find some other explication of that applause, which is paid to objects, whether inanimate, animate, or rational, if they have a tendency to promote the welfare and advantage of mankind. However difficult it be to conceive that an object is approved of on account of its tendency to a certain end, while the end itself is totally indifferent: let us swallow this

absurdity, and consider what are the consequences. The preceding delineation or definition of Personal Merit must still retain its evidence and authority: it must still be allowed that every quality of the mind, which is *useful* or *agreeable* to the *person himself* or to *others*, communicates a pleasure to the spectator, engages his esteem, and is admitted under the honourable denomination of virtue or merit. Are not justice, fidelity, honour, veracity, allegiance, chastity, esteemed solely on account of their tendency to promote the good of society? Is not that tendency inseparable from humanity, benevolence, lenity, generosity, gratitude, moderation, tenderness, friendship, and all the other social virtues? Can it possibly be doubted that industry, discretion, frugality, secrecy, order, perseverance, forethought, judgement, and this whole class of virtues and accomplishments, of which many pages would not contain the catalogue; can it be doubted, I say, that the tendency of these qualities to promote the interest and happiness of their possessor, is the sole foundation of their merit? Who can dispute that a mind, which supports a perpetual serenity and cheerfulness, a noble dignity and undaunted spirit, a tender affection and good-will to all around; as it has more enjoyment within itself, is also a more animating and rejoicing spectacle, than if dejected with melancholy, tormented with anxiety, irritated with rage, or sunk into the most abject baseness and degeneracy? And as to the qualities, immediately *agreeable to others*, they speak sufficiently for themselves; and he must be unhappy, indeed, either in his own temper, or in his situation and company, who has never perceived the charms of a facetious wit or flowing affability, of a delicate modesty or decent genteelness of address and manner.

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ADAM SMITH

(1723–1790)

THE THEORY OF MORAL SENTIMENTS*

PART I. — OF THE PROPRIETY OF ACTION

SECTION I. OF THE SENSE OF PROPRIETY

CHAPTER I. OF SYMPATHY

How selfish soever man may be supposed, there are evidently some principles in his nature, which interest him in the fortune of others, and render their happiness necessary to him, though he derives nothing from it except the pleasure of seeing it. Of this kind is pity or compassion, the emotion which we feel for the misery of others, when we either see it, or are made to conceive it in a very lively manner. That we often derive sorrow from the sorrow of others, is a matter of fact too obvious to require any instances to prove it; for this sentiment, like all the other original passions of human nature, is by no means confined to the virtuous and humane, though they perhaps may feel it with the most exquisite sensibility. The greatest ruffian, the most hardened violator of the laws of society, is not altogether without it.

As we have no immediate experience of what other men feel, we can form no idea of the manner in which they are affected, but by conceiving what we ourselves should feel in the like situation. Though our brother is upon the rack, as long as we ourselves are at our ease, our senses will never inform us of what he suffers. They never did, and never can, carry us beyond our own person, and it is by the imagination only that we can form any conception of what are his sensations. Neither can that faculty help us to this any other way, than by representing to us what would be our own, if we were in his case. It is the impressions of our own senses only, not those of his, which our imaginations

* 1st ed., London, 1759; 6th ed., *ib.*, 1790.

copy. By the imagination we place ourselves in his situation, we conceive ourselves enduring all the same torments, we enter as it were into his body, and become in some measure the same person with him, and thence form some idea of his sensations, and even feel something which, though weaker in degree, is not altogether unlike them. His agonies, when they are thus brought home to ourselves, when we have thus adopted and made them our own, begin at last to affect us, and we then tremble and shudder at the thought of what he feels. For as to be in pain or distress of any kind excites the most excessive sorrow, so to conceive or to imagine that we are in it, excites some degree of the same emotion, in proportion to the vivacity or dulness of the conception.

That this is the source of our fellow-feeling for the misery of others, that it is by changing places in fancy with the sufferer, that we come either to conceive or to be affected by what he feels, may be demonstrated by many obvious observations, if it should not be thought sufficiently evident of itself. When we see a stroke aimed and just ready to fall upon the leg or arm of another person, we naturally shrink and draw back our own leg or our own arm; and when it does fall, we feel it in some measure, and are hurt by it as well as the sufferer. The mob, when they are gazing at a dancer on the slack rope, naturally writhe and twist and balance their own bodies, as they see him do, and as they feel that they themselves must do it in his situation. Persons of delicate fibres, and a weak constitution of body, complain, that in looking on the sores and ulcers which are exposed by beggars in the streets, they are apt to feel an itching or uneasy sensation in the correspondent part of their own bodies. The horror which they conceive at the misery of those wretches affects that particular part in themselves more than any other; because that horror arises from conceiving what they themselves would suffer, if they really were the wretches whom they are looking upon, and if that particular part in themselves was actually affected in the same miserable manner. The very force of this conception is sufficient, in their feeble frames, to produce that itching or uneasy sensation complained of. Men of the most robust make observe, that in looking upon sore eyes they often feel a very sensible soreness in

their own, which proceeds from the same reason; that organ being in the strongest man more delicate than any other part of the body is in the weakest.

Neither is it those circumstances only, which create pain or sorrow, that call forth our fellow-feeling. Whatever is the passion which arises from any object in the person principally concerned, an analogous emotion springs up, at the thought of his situation, in the breast of every attentive spectator. Our joy for the deliverance of those heroes of tragedy or romance who interest us, is as sincere as our grief for their distress, and our fellow-feeling with their misery is not more real than that with their happiness. We enter into their gratitude towards those faithful friends who did not desert them in their difficulties; and we heartily go along with their resentment against those perfidious traitors who injured, abandoned, or deceived them. In every passion of which the mind of man is susceptible, the emotions of the by-stander always correspond to what, by bringing the case home to himself, he imagines should be the sentiments of the sufferer.

Pity and compassion are words appropriated to signify our fellow-feeling with the sorrow of others. Sympathy, though its meaning was, perhaps, originally the same, may now, however, without much impropriety, be made use of to denote our fellow-feeling with any passion whatever.

Upon some occasions sympathy may seem to arise merely from the view of a certain emotion in another person. The passions, upon some occasions, may seem to be transfused from one man to another, instantaneously, and antecedent to any knowledge of what excited them in the person principally concerned. Grief and joy, for example, strongly expressed in the look and gestures of any one, at once affect the spectator with some degree of a like painful or agreeable emotion. A smiling face is, to everybody that sees it, a cheerful object; as a sorrowful countenance, on the other hand, is a melancholy one.

This, however, does not hold universally, or with regard to every passion. There are some passions of which the expressions excite no sort of sympathy, but before we are acquainted with what gave occasion to them, serve rather to disgust and pro-

voke us against them. The furious behaviour of an angry man is more likely to exasperate us against himself than against his enemies. As we are unacquainted with his provocation, we cannot bring his case home to ourselves, nor conceive anything like the passions which it excites. But we plainly see what is the situation of those with whom he is angry, and to what violence they may be exposed from so enraged an adversary. We readily, therefore, sympathize with their fear or resentment, and are immediately disposed to take part against the man from whom they appear to be in so much danger.

If the very appearances of grief and joy inspire us with some degree of the like emotions, it is because they suggest to us the general idea of some good or bad fortune that has befallen the person in whom we observe them: and in these passions this is sufficient to have some little influence upon us. The effects of grief and joy terminate in the person who feels those emotions, of which the expressions do not, like those of resentment, suggest to us the idea of any other person for whom we are concerned, and whose interests are opposite to his. The general idea of good or bad fortune, therefore, creates some concern for the person who has met with it, but the general idea of provocation excites no sympathy with the anger of the man who has received it. Nature, it seems, teaches us to be more adverse to enter into this passion, and, till informed of its cause, to be disposed rather to take part against it.

Even our sympathy with the grief or joy of another, before we are informed of the cause of either, is always extremely imperfect. General lamentations, which express nothing but the anguish of the sufferer, create rather a curiosity to inquire into his situation, along with some disposition to sympathize with him, than any actual sympathy that is very sensible. The first question which we ask is, What has befallen you? Till this be answered, though we are uneasy both from the vague idea of his misfortune, and still more from torturing ourselves with conjectures about what it may be, yet our fellow-feeling is not very considerable.

Sympathy, therefore, does not arise so much from the view

of the passion, as from that of the situation which excites it. We sometimes feel for another, a passion of which he himself seems to be altogether incapable; because, when we put ourselves in his case, that passion arises in our breast from the imagination, though it does not in his from the reality. We blush for the impudence and rudeness of another, though he himself appears to have no sense of the impropriety of his own behaviour; because we cannot help feeling with what confusion we ourselves should be covered had we behaved in so absurd a manner.

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Chapter IV. Of the Manner in which we judge of the Propriety or Impropriety of the Affections of other Men by their Concord or Dissonance with our own

We may judge of the propriety or impropriety of the sentiments of another person by their correspondence or disagreement with our own, upon two different occasions; either, first, when the objects which excite them are considered without any particular relation either to ourselves or to the person whose sentiments we judge of; or, secondly, when they are considered as peculiarly affecting one or other of us.

1. With regard to those objects which are considered without any peculiar relation either to ourselves or to the person whose sentiments we judge of; wherever his sentiments entirely correspond with our own, we ascribe to him the qualities of taste and good judgment. The beauty of a plain, the greatness of a mountain, the ornaments of a building, the expression of a picture, the composition of a discourse, the conduct of a third person, the proportions of different quantities and numbers, the various appearances which the great machine of the universe is perpetually exhibiting, with the secret wheels and springs which produce them; all the general subjects of science and taste, are what we and our companions regard as having no peculiar relation to either of us. We both look at them from the same point of view, and we have no occasion for sympathy, or for that imaginary change of situations from which it arises, in order to produce, with regard to these, the most perfect harmony of

sentiments and affections. If, notwithstanding, we are often differently affected, it arises either from the different degrees of attention which our different habits of life allow us to give easily to the several parts of those complex objects, or from the different degrees of natural acuteness in the faculty of the mind to which they are addressed.

When the sentiments of our companion coincide with our own in things of this kind, which are obvious and easy, and in which, perhaps, we never found a single person who differed from us, though we, no doubt, must approve of them, yet he seems to deserve no praise or admiration on account of them. But when they not only coincide with our own, but lead and direct our own; when in forming them he appears to have attended to many things which we had overlooked, and to have adjusted them to all the various circumstances of their objects; we not only approve of them, but wonder and are surprised at their uncommon and unexpected acuteness and comprehensiveness, and he appears to deserve a very high degree of admiration and applause. For approbation, heightened by wonder and surprise, constitutes the sentiment which is properly called admiration, and of which applause is the natural expression. The decision of the man who judges that exquisite beauty is preferable to the grossest deformity, or that twice two are equal to four, must certainly be approved of by all the world, but will not, surely, be much admired. It is the acute and delicate discernment of the man of taste, who distinguishes the minute and scarce perceptible differences of beauty and deformity; it is the comprehensive accuracy of the experienced mathematician, who unravels with ease the most intricate and perplexed proportions; it is the great leader in science and taste, the man who directs and conducts our own sentiments, the extent and superior justness of whose talents astonish us with wonder and surprise, who excites our admiration, and seems to deserve our applause; and upon this foundation is grounded the greater part of the praise which is bestowed upon what are called the intellectual virtues.

The utility of those qualities, it may be thought, is what first recommends them to us; and, no doubt, the consideration of

this, when we come to attend to it, gives them a new value. Originally, however, we approve of another man's judgment, not as something useful, but as right, as accurate, as agreeable to truth and reality: and it is evident we attribute those qualities to it for no other reason but because we find that it agrees with our own. Taste, in the same manner, is originally approved of, not as useful, but as just, as delicate, and as precisely suited to its object. The idea of the utility of all qualities of this kind, is plainly an after-thought, and not what first recommends them to our approbation.

2. With regard to those objects, which affect in a particular manner either ourselves or the person whose sentiments we judge of, it is at once more difficult to preserve this harmony and correspondence, and, at the same time, vastly more important. My companion does not naturally look upon the misfortune that has befallen me, or the injury that has been done me, from the same point of view in which I consider them. They affect me much more nearly. We do not view them from the same station, as we do a picture, or a poem, or a system of philosophy, and are, therefore, apt to be very differently affected by them. But I can much more easily overlook the want of this correspondence of sentiments with regard to such indifferent objects as concern neither me nor my companion, than with regard to what interests me so much as the misfortune that has befallen me, or the injury that has been done me. Though you despise that picture, or that poem, or even that system of philosophy, which I admire, there is little danger of our quarrelling upon that account. Neither of us can reasonably be much interested about them. They ought all of them to be matters of great indifference to us both; so that, though our opinions may be opposite, our affections may still be very nearly the same. But it is quite otherwise with regard to those objects by which either you or I are particularly affected. Though your judgments in matters of speculation, though your sentiments in matters of taste, are quite opposite to mine, I can easily overlook this opposition; and if I have any degree of temper, I may still find some entertainment in your conversation, even upon those very subjects. But if you have

either no fellow-feeling for the misfortunes I have met with, or none that bears any proportion to the grief which distracts me; or if you have either no indignation at the injuries I have suffered, or none that bears any proportion to the resentment which transports me, we can no longer converse upon these subjects. We become intolerable to one another. I can neither support your company, nor you mine. You are confounded at my violence and passion, and I am enraged at your cold insensibility and want of feeling.

In all such cases, that there may be some correspondence of sentiments between the spectator and the person principally concerned, the spectator must, first of all, endeavour, as much as he can, to put himself in the situation of the other, and to bring home to himself every little circumstance of distress which can possibly occur to the sufferer. He must adopt the whole case of his companion with all its minutest incidents; and strive to render as perfect as possible that imaginary change of situation upon which his sympathy is founded.

Part II. — Of Merit and Demerit; or, of the Objects of Reward and Punishment

Section I. — Of the Sense of Merit and Demerit

Chapter I. That whatever appears to be the proper Object of Gratitude, appears to deserve Reward; and that, in the same manner, whatever appears to be the proper Object of Resentment, appears to deserve Punishment

To us, therefore, that action must appear to deserve reward, which appears to be the proper and approved object of that sentiment, which most immediately and directly prompts us to reward, or to do good to another. And in the same manner, that action must appear to deserve punishment, which appears to be the proper and approved object of that sentiment which

most immediately and directly prompts us to punish, or to inflict evil upon another.

The sentiment which most immediately and directly prompts us to reward, is gratitude; that which most immediately and directly prompts us to punish, is resentment.

To us, therefore, that action must appear to deserve reward, which appears to be the proper and approved object of gratitude; as, on the other hand, that action must appear to deserve punishment, which appears to be the proper and approved object of resentment.

To reward is to recompense, to remunerate, to return good for good received. To punish, too, is to recompense, to remunerate, though in a different manner; it is to return evil for evil that has been done.

There are some other passions, besides gratitude and resentment, which interest us in the happiness or misery of others; but there are none which so directly excite us to be the instruments of either. The love and esteem which grow upon acquaintance and habitual approbation, necessarily lead us to be pleased with the good fortune of the man who is the object of such agreeable emotions, and consequently, to be willing to lend a hand to promote it. Our love, however, is fully satisfied, though his good fortune should be brought about without our assistance. All that this passion desires is to see him happy, without regarding who was the author of his prosperity. But gratitude is not to be satisfied in this manner. If the person to whom we owe many obligations is made happy without our assistance, though it pleases our love, it does not content our gratitude. Till we have recompensed him, till we ourselves have been instrumental in promoting his happiness, we feel ourselves still loaded with that debt which his past services have laid upon us.

The hatred and dislike, in the same manner, which grow upon habitual disapprobation, would often lead us to take a malicious pleasure in the misfortune of the man whose conduct and character excite so painful a passion. But though dislike and hatred harden us against all sympathy, and sometimes dispose us even to rejoice at the distress of another, yet, if there is no re-

sentment in the case, if neither we nor our friends have received any great personal provocation, these passions would not naturally lead us to wish to be instrumental in bringing it about.

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But it is quite otherwise with resentment: if the person who has done us some great injury, who had murdered our father or our brother, for example, should soon afterwards die of a fever, or even be brought to the scaffold upon account of some other crime, though it might soothe our hatred, it would not fully gratify our resentment. Resentment would prompt us to desire, not only that he should be punished, but that he should be punished by our means, and upon account of that particular injury which he had done to us. Resentment cannot be fully gratified unless the offender is not only made to grieve in his turn, but to grieve for that particular wrong which we have suffered from him. He must be made to repent and be sorry for this very action, that others, through fear of the like punishment, may be terrified from being guilty of the like offence. The natural gratification of this passion tends, of its own accord, to produce all the political ends of punishment; the correction of the criminal, and the example to the public.

Gratitude and resentment, therefore, are the sentiments which most immediately and directly prompt to reward and to punish. To us, therefore, he must appear to deserve reward, who appears to be the proper and approved object of gratitude; and he to deserve punishment, who appears to be that of resentment.

Chapter II. Of the Proper Objects of Gratitude and Resentment

To be the proper and approved object either of gratitude or resentment, can mean nothing but to be the object of that gratitude, and of that resentment which naturally seems proper, and is approved of.

But these, as well as all the other passions of human nature, seem proper and are approved of, when the heart of every impartial spectator entirely sympathizes with them, when every indifferent by-stander entirely enters into, and goes along with them.

He, therefore, appears to deserve reward, who, to some person or persons, is the natural object of a gratitude which every human heart is disposed to beat time to, and thereby applaud; and he, on the other hand, appears to deserve punishment, who in the same manner is to some person or persons the natural object of a resentment which the breast of every reasonable man is ready to adopt and sympathize with. To us, surely, that action must appear to deserve reward which everybody who knows of it would wish to reward, and therefore delights to see rewarded: and that action must as surely appear to deserve punishment which everybody who hears of it is angry with, and upon that account rejoices to see punished.

1. As we sympathize with the joy of our companions when in prosperity, so we join with them in the complacency and satisfaction with which they naturally regard whatever is the cause of their good fortune. We enter into the love and affection which they conceive for it, and begin to love it too. We should be sorry for their sakes if it was destroyed, or even if it was placed at too great a distance from them, and out of the reach of their care and protection, though they should lose nothing by its absence except the pleasure of seeing it. If it is a man who has thus been the fortunate instrument of the happiness of his brethren, this is still more peculiarly the case. When we see one man assisted, protected, relieved by another, our sympathy with the joy of the person who receives the benefit serves only to animate our fellow-feeling with his gratitude towards him who bestows it. When we look upon the person who is the cause of his pleasure with the eyes with which we imagine he must look upon him, his benefactor seems to stand before us in the most engaging and amiable light. We readily therefore sympathize with the grateful affection which he conceives for a person to whom he has been so much obliged; and consequently applaud the returns which he is disposed to make for the good offices conferred upon him. As we entirely enter into the affection from which these returns proceed, they necessarily seem every way proper and suitable to their object.

2. In the same manner, as we sympathize with the sorrow

of our fellow-creature whenever we see his distress, so we likewise enter into his abhorrence and aversion for whatever has given occasion to it. Our heart, as it adopts and beats time to his grief, so it is likewise animated with that spirit by which he endeavours to drive away or destroy the cause of it. The indolent and passive fellow-feeling by which we accompany him in his sufferings, readily gives way to that more vigorous and active sentiment by which we go along with him in the effort he makes, either to repel them, or to gratify his aversion to what has given occasion to them. This is still more peculiarly the case, when it is man who has caused them. When we see one man oppressed or injured by another, the sympathy which we feel with the distress of the sufferer seems to serve only to animate our fellow-feeling with his resentment against the offender. We are rejoiced to see him attack his adversary in his turn, and are eager and ready to assist him whenever he exerts himself for defence, or even for vengeance within a certain degree. If the injured should perish in the quarrel, we not only sympathize with the real resentment of his friends and relations, but with the imaginary resentment which in fancy we lend to the dead, who is no longer capable of feeling or any other human sentiment.

Chapter IV. Recapitulation of the Foregoing Chapters

1. We do not, therefore, thoroughly and heartily sympathize with the gratitude of one man towards another, merely because this other has been the cause of his good fortune, unless he has been the cause of it from motives which we entirely go along with. Our heart must adopt the principles of the agent, and go along with all the affections which influenced his conduct, before it can entirely sympathize with, and beat time to, the gratitude of the person who has been benefited by his actions. If in the conduct of the benefactor there appears to have been no propriety, how beneficial soever its effects, it does not seem to demand, or necessarily to require, any proportionable recompense.

But when to the beneficent tendency of the action is joined

the propriety of the affection from which it proceeds, when we entirely sympathize and go along with the motives of the agent, the love which we conceive for him upon his own account, enhances and enlivens our fellow-feeling with the gratitude of those who owe their prosperity to his good conduct. His actions seem then to demand, and, if I may say so, to call aloud for a proportionable recompense. We then entirely enter into that gratitude which prompts to bestow it. The benefactor seems then to be the proper object of reward, when we thus entirely sympathize with, and approve of, that sentiment which prompts to reward him. When we approve of, and go along with, the affection from which the action proceeds, we must necessarily approve of the action, and regard the person towards whom it is directed as its proper and suitable object.

Part III. — Of the Foundation of our Judgments concerning our own Sentiments and Conduct, and of the Sense of Duty

Chapter I. Of the Principle of Self-approbation and of Self-disapprobation

In the two foregoing parts of this discourse, I have chiefly considered the origin and foundation of our judgments concerning the sentiments and conduct of others. I come now to consider more particularly the origin of those concerning our own.

The principle by which we naturally either approve or disapprove of our own conduct seems to be altogether the same with that by which we exercise the like judgments concerning the conduct of other people. We either approve or disapprove of the conduct of another man according as we feel that, when we bring his case home to ourselves, we either can or cannot entirely sympathize with the sentiments and motives which directed it. And, in the same manner, we either approve or disapprove of our own conduct, according as we feel that, when we place ourselves in the situation of another man, and view it,

as it were, with his eyes, and from his station, we either can or cannot entirely enter into and sympathize with the sentiments and motives which influenced it. We can never survey our own sentiments and motives, we can never form any judgment concerning them; unless we remove ourselves, as it were, from our own natural station, and endeavour to view them as at a certain distance from us. But we can do this in no other way than by endeavouring to view them with the eyes of other people, or as other people are likely to view them. Whatever judgment we can form concerning them, accordingly, must always bear some secret reference, either to what are, or to what, upon a certain condition, would be, or to what, we imagine, ought to be the judgment of others. We endeavour to examine our own conduct as we imagine any other fair and impartial spectator would examine it. If, upon placing ourselves in his situation, we thoroughly enter into all the passions and motives which influenced it, we approve of it, by sympathy with the approbation of this supposed equitable judge. If otherwise, we enter into his disapprobation, and condemn it.

Were it possible that a human creature could grow up to manhood in some solitary place, without any communication with his own species, he could no more think of his own character, of the propriety or demerit of his own sentiments and conduct, of the beauty or deformity of his own mind, than of the beauty or deformity of his own face. All these are objects which he cannot easily see, which naturally he does not look at, and with regard to which he is provided with no mirror which can present them to his view. Bring him into society, and he is immediately provided with the mirror which he wanted before. It is placed in the countenance and behaviour of those he lives with, which always mark when they enter into, and when they disapprove of his sentiments; and it is here that he first views the propriety and impropriety of his own passions, the beauty and deformity of his own mind. To a man who from his birth was a stranger to society, the objects of his passions, the external bodies which either pleased or hurt him, would occupy his whole attention. The passions themselves, the desires or aversions, the

joys or sorrows, which those objects excited, though of all things the most immediately present to him, could scarce ever be the objects of his thoughts. The idea of them could never interest him so much as to call upon his attentive consideration. The consideration of his joy could in him excite no new joy, nor that of his sorrow any new sorrow, though the consideration of the causes of those passions might often excite both. Bring him into society, and all his own passions will immediately become the causes of new passions. He will observe that mankind approve of some of them, and are disgusted by others. He will be elevated in the one case, and cast down in the other; his desires and aversions, his joys and sorrows, will now often become the causes of new desires and new aversions, new joys and new sorrows: they will now, therefore, interest him deeply, and often call upon his most attentive consideration.

Our first ideas of personal beauty and deformity are drawn from the shape and appearance of others, not from our own. We soon become sensible, however, that others exercise the same criticism upon us. We are pleased when they approve of our figure, and are disobliged when they seem to be disgusted. We become anxious to know how far our appearance deserves either their blame or approbation. We examine our persons limb by limb, and by placing ourselves before a looking-glass, or by some such expedient, endeavour, as much as possible, to view ourselves at the distance and with the eyes of other people. If, after this examination, we are satisfied with our own appearance, we can more easily support the most disadvantageous judgments of others. If, on the contrary, we are sensible that we are the natural objects of distaste, every appearance of their disapprobation mortifies us beyond all measure. A man who is tolerably handsome, will allow you to laugh at any little irregularity in his person; but all such jokes are commonly unsupportable to one who is really deformed. It is evident, however, that we are anxious about our own beauty and deformity, only upon account of its effect upon others. If we had no connexion with society, we should be altogether indifferent about either.

In the same manner our first moral criticisms are exercised

upon the characters and conduct of other people; and we are all very forward to observe how each of these affects us. But we soon learn, that other people are equally frank with regard to our own. We become anxious to know how far we deserve their censure or applause, and whether to them we must necessarily appear those agreeable or disagreeable creatures which they represent us. We begin, upon this account, to examine our own passions and conduct, and to consider how these must appear to them, by considering how they would appear to us if in their situation. We suppose ourselves the spectators of our own behaviour, and endeavour to imagine what effect it would, in this light, produce upon us. This is the only looking-glass by which we can, in some measure, with the eyes of other people, scrutinize the propriety of our own conduct. If in this view it pleases us, we are tolerably satisfied. We can be more indifferent about the applause, and, in some measure, despise the censure of the world; secure that, however misunderstood or misrepresented, we are the natural and proper objects of approbation. On the contrary, if we are doubtful about it, we are often upon that very account, more anxious to gain their approbation, and provided we have not already, as they say, shaken hands with infamy, we are altogether distracted at the thoughts of their censure, which then strikes us with double severity.

When I endeavour to examine my own conduct, when I endeavour to pass sentence upon it, and either to approve or condemn it, it is evident that, in all such cases, I divide myself, as it were, into two persons; and that I, the examiner and judge, represent a different character from that other I, the person whose conduct is examined into, and judged of. The first is the spectator, whose sentiments with regard to my own conduct I endeavour to enter into, by placing myself in his situation, and by considering how it would appear to me, when seen from that particular point of view. The second is the agent, the person whom I properly call myself, and of whose conduct, under the character of a spectator, I was endeavouring to form some opinion. The first is the judge; the second the person judged of. But that the judge should, in every respect, be the same with the

person judged of, is as impossible, as that the cause should, in every respect, be the same with the effect.

To be amiable and to be meritorious; that is, to deserve love and to deserve reward, are the great characters of virtue; and to be odious and punishable, of vice. But all these characters have an immediate reference to the sentiments of others. Virtue is not said to be amiable, or to be meritorious, because it is the object of its own love, or of its own gratitude; but because it excites those sentiments in other men. The consciousness that it is the object of such favourable regards, is the source of that inward tranquillity and self-satisfaction with which it is naturally attended, as the suspicion of the contrary, gives occasion to the torments of vice. What so great happiness as to be beloved, and to know that we deserve to be beloved? What so great misery as to be hated, and to know that we deserve to be hated?

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Chapter IV. Of the Nature of Self-deceit, and of the Origin and Use of General Rules

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There are two different occasions upon which we examine our own conduct, and endeavour to view it in the light in which the impartial spectator would view it: first, when we are about to act; and secondly, after we have acted. Our views are apt to be very partial in both cases; but they are apt to be most partial when it is of most importance that they should be otherwise.

When we are about to act, the eagerness of passion will seldom allow us to consider what we are doing, with the candour of an indifferent person. The violent emotions which at that time agitate us, discolour our views of things, even when we are endeavouring to place ourselves in the situation of another, and to regard the objects that interest us in the light in which they will naturally appear to him. The fury of our own passions constantly calls us back to our own place, where everything appears magnified and misrepresented by self-love. Of the manner in which those objects would appear to another, of the view which

he would take of them, we can obtain, if I may say so, but instantaneous glimpses, which vanish in a moment, and which, even while they last, are not altogether just. We cannot even for that moment divest ourselves entirely of the heat and keenness with which our peculiar situation inspires us, nor consider what we are about to do with the complete impartiality of an equitable judge. The passions, upon this account, as father Malebranche says, all justify themselves, and seem reasonable and proportioned to their objects, as long as we continue to feel them.

When the action is over, indeed, and the passions which prompted it have subsided, we can enter more coolly into the sentiments of the indifferent spectator. What before interested us is now become almost as indifferent to us as it always was to him, and we can now examine our own conduct with his candour and impartiality. The man of to-day is no longer agitated by the same passions which distracted the man of yesterday: and when the paroxysm of emotion, in the same manner as when the paroxysm of distress, is fairly over, we can identify ourselves, as it were, with the ideal man within the breast, and, in our own character, view, as in the one case, our own situation, so in the other, our own conduct, with the severe eyes of the most impartial spectator. But our judgments now are often of little importance in comparison of what they were before; and can frequently produce nothing but vain regret and unavailing repentance; without always securing us from the like errors in time to come.

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So partial are the views of mankind with regard to the propriety of their own conduct, both at the time of action and after it; and so difficult is it for them to view it in the light in which any indifferent spectator would consider it. But if it was by a peculiar faculty, such as the moral sense is supposed to be, that they judged of their own conduct, if they were endued with a particular power of perception, which distinguished the beauty or deformity of passions and affections; as their own passions would be more immediately exposed to the view of this faculty, it would judge with more accuracy concerning them, than con-

cerning those of other men, of which it had only a more distant prospect.

This self-deceit, this fatal weakness of mankind, is the source of half the disorders of human life. If we saw ourselves in the light in which others see us, or in which they would see us if they knew all, a reformation would generally be unavoidable. We could not otherwise endure the fight.

Nature, however, has not left this weakness, which is of so much importance, altogether without a remedy; nor has she abandoned us entirely to the delusions of self-love. Our continual observations upon the conduct of others, insensibly lead us to form to ourselves certain general rules concerning what is fit and proper either to be done or to be avoided. Some of their actions shock all our natural sentiments. We hear everybody about us express the like detestation against them. This still further confirms, and even exasperates our natural sense of their deformity. It satisfies us that we view them in the proper light, when we see other people view them in the same light. We resolve never to be guilty of the like, nor ever, upon any account, to render ourselves in this manner the objects of universal disapprobation. We thus naturally lay down to ourselves a general rule, that all such actions are to be avoided, as tending to render us odious, contemptible, or punishable, the objects of all those sentiments for which we have the greatest dread and aversion. Other actions, on the contrary, call forth our approbation, and we hear everybody around us express the same favourable opinion concerning them. Everybody is eager to honour and reward them. They excite all those sentiments for which we have by nature the strongest desire; the love, the gratitude, the admiration of mankind. We become ambitious of performing the like; and thus naturally lay down to ourselves a rule of another kind, that every opportunity of acting in this manner is carefully to be sought after.

It is thus that the general rules of morality are formed. They are ultimately founded upon experience of what, in particular instances, our moral faculties, our natural sense of merit and propriety, approve, or disapprove of. We do not originally

approve or condemn particular actions; because, upon examination, they appear to be agreeable or inconsistent with a certain general rule. The general rule, on the contrary, is formed, by finding from experience, that all actions of a certain kind, or circumstanced in a certain manner, are approved or disapproved of. To the man who first saw an inhuman murder, committed from avarice, envy, or unjust resentment, and upon one too that loved and trusted the murderer, who beheld the last agonies of the dying person, who heard him, with his expiring breath, complain more of the perfidy and ingratitude of his false friend, than of the violence which had been done to him, there could be no occasion, in order to conceive how horrible such an action was, that he should reflect, that one of the most sacred rules of conduct was what prohibited the taking away the life of an innocent person, that this was a plain violation of that rule, and consequently, a very blameable action. His detestation of this crime, it is evident, would arise instantaneously and antecedent to his having formed to himself any such general rule. The general rule, on the contrary, which he might afterwards form, would be founded upon the detestation which he felt necessarily arise in his own breast, at the thought of this, and every other particular action of the same kind.

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When these general rules, indeed, have been formed, when they are universally acknowledged and established, by the concurring sentiments of mankind, we frequently appeal to them as to the standards of judgment, in debating concerning the degree of praise or blame that is due to certain actions of a complicated and dubious nature. They are upon these occasions commonly cited as the ultimate foundations of what is just and unjust in human conduct; and this circumstance seems to have misled several very eminent authors, to draw up their systems in such a manner, as if they had supposed that the original judgments of mankind with regard to right and wrong, were formed like the decisions of a court of judicatory, by considering first the general rule, and then, secondly, whether the particular action under consideration fell properly within its comprehension.

Part IV. — Of the Effect of Utility upon the Sentiment of Approbation

Chapter II. Of the Beauty which the Appearance of Utility bestows upon the Characters and Actions of Men; and how far the perception of this Beauty may be regarded as one of the original Principles of Approbation

The characters of men, as well as the contrivances of art, or the institutions of civil government, may be fitted either to promote or to disturb the happiness both of the individual and of the society. The prudent, the equitable, the active, resolute, and sober character promises prosperity and satisfaction, both to the person himself and to every one connected with him. The rash, the insolent, the slothful, effeminate, and voluptuous, on the contrary, forbodes ruin to the individual, and misfortune to all who have anything to do with him. The first turn of mind has at least all the beauty which can belong to the most perfect machine that was ever invented for promoting the most agreeable purpose: and the second, all the deformity of the most awkward and clumsy contrivance. What institution of government could tend so much to promote the happiness of mankind as the general prevalence of wisdom and virtue? All government is but an imperfect remedy for the deficiency of these. Whatever beauty, therefore, can belong to civil government upon account of its utility, must in a far superior degree belong to these. On the contrary, what civil policy can be so ruinous and destructive as the vices of men? The fatal effects of bad government arise from nothing, but that it does not sufficiently guard against the mischiefs which human wickedness gives occasion to.

This beauty and deformity which characters appear to derive from their usefulness or inconveniency, are apt to strike, in a peculiar manner, those who consider, in an abstract and philosophical light, the actions and conduct of mankind. When a philosopher goes to examine why humanity is approved of or cruelty condemned, he does not always form to himself, in a very

clear and distinct manner, the conception of any one particular action either of cruelty or of humanity, but is commonly contented with the vague and indeterminate idea which the general names of those qualities suggest to him. But it is in particular instances only that the propriety or impropriety, the merit or demerit of actions is very obvious and discernible. It is only when particular examples are given that we perceive distinctly either the concord or disagreement between our own affections and those of the agent, or feel a social gratitude arise towards him in the one case, or a sympathetic resentment in the other. When we consider virtue and vice in an abstract and general manner, the qualities by which they excite these several sentiments seem in a great measure to disappear, and the sentiments themselves become less obvious and discernible. On the contrary, the happy effects of the one and the fatal consequences of the other seem then to rise up to the view, and as it were to stand out and distinguish themselves from all the other qualities of either.

The same ingenious and agreeable author who first explained why utility pleases, has been so struck with this view of things, as to resolve our whole approbation of virtue into a perception of this species of beauty which results from the appearance of utility. No qualities of the mind, he observes, are approved of as virtuous, but such as are useful or agreeable either to the person himself or to others; and no qualities are disapproved of as vicious, but such as have a contrary tendency. And Nature, indeed, seems to have so happily adjusted our sentiments of approbation and disapprobation, to the conveniency both of the individual and of the society, that after the strictest examination it will be found, I believe, that this is universally the case. But still I affirm that it is not the view of this utility or hurtfulness which is either the first or principal source of our approbation and disapprobation. These sentiments are no doubt enhanced and enlivened by the perception of the beauty or deformity which results from this utility or hurtfulness. But still, I say, they are originally and essentially different from this perception.

For first of all, it seems impossible that the approbation of

virtue should be a sentiment of the same kind with that by which we approve of a convenient and well-contrived building; or that we should have no other reason for praising a man than that for which we recommend a chest of drawers.

And secondly, it will be found, upon examination, that the usefulness of any disposition of mind is seldom the first ground of our approbation; and that the sentiment of approbation always involves in it a sense of propriety quite distinct from the perception of utility. We may observe this with regard to all the qualities which are approved of as virtuous, both those which, according to this system, are originally valued as useful to ourselves, as well as those which are esteemed on account of their usefulness to others.

The qualities most useful to ourselves are, first of all, superior reason and understanding, by which we are capable of discerning the remote consequences of all our actions, and of foreseeing the advantage or detriment which is likely to result from them: and secondly, self-command, by which we are enabled to abstain from present pleasure or to endure present pain, in order to obtain a greater pleasure or to avoid a greater pain in some future time. In the union of those two qualities consists the virtue of prudence, of all the virtues that which is most useful to the individual.

With regard to the first of those qualities, it has been observed on a former occasion, that superior reason and understanding are originally approved of as just and right and accurate, and not merely as useful or advantageous. It is in the abstruser sciences, particularly in the higher parts of mathematics, that the greatest and most admired exertions of human reason have been displayed. But the utility of those sciences, either to the individual or to the public, is not very obvious, and to prove it, requires a discussion which is not always very easily comprehended. It was not, therefore, their utility which first recommended them to the public admiration. This quality was but little insisted upon, till it became necessary to make some reply to the reproaches of those, who, having themselves no taste for such sublime discoveries, endeavoured to depreciate them as useless.

That self-command, in the same manner, by which we restrain our present appetites, in order to gratify them more fully upon another occasion, is approved of, as much under the aspect of propriety, as under that of utility. When we act in this manner, the sentiments which influence our conduct seem exactly to coincide with those of the spectator. The spectator does not feel the solicitations of our present appetites. To him the pleasure which we are to enjoy a week hence, or a year hence, is just as interesting as that which we are to enjoy this moment. When for the sake of the present, therefore, we sacrifice the future, our conduct appears to him absurd and extravagant in the highest degree, and he cannot enter into the principles which influence it. On the contrary, when we abstain from present pleasure, in order to secure greater pleasure to come, when we act as if the remote object interested us as much as that which immediately presses upon the senses, as our affections exactly correspond with his own, he cannot fail to approve of our behaviour: and as he knows from experience, how few are capable of this self-command, he looks upon our conduct with a considerable degree of wonder and admiration. Hence arises that eminent esteem with which all men naturally regard a steady perseverance in the practice of frugality, industry, and application, though directed to no other purpose than the acquisition of fortune. The resolute firmness of the person who acts in this manner, and, in order to obtain a great though remote advantage, not only gives up all present pleasures, but endures the greatest labour both of mind and body, necessarily commands our approbation. That view of his interest and happiness which appears to regulate his conduct, exactly tallies with the idea which we naturally form of it. There is the most perfect correspondence between his sentiments and our own, and at the same time, from our experience of the common weakness of human nature, it is a correspondence which we could not reasonably have expected. We not only approve, therefore, but in some measure admire his conduct, and think it worthy of a considerable degree of applause. It is the consciousness of this merited approbation and esteem which is alone capable of supporting the agent in this tenour

of conduct. The pleasure which we are to enjoy ten years hence interests us so little in comparison with that which we may enjoy to-day, the passion which the first excites, is naturally so weak in comparison with that violent emotion which the second is apt to give occasion to, that the one could never be any balance to the other, unless it was supported by the sense of propriety, by the consciousness that we merited the esteem and approbation of everybody, by acting in the one way, and that we became the proper objects of their contempt and derision by behaving in the other.

Humanity, justice, generosity, and public spirit, are the qualities most useful to others. Wherein consists the propriety of humanity and justice has been explained upon a former occasion, where it was shown how much our esteem and approbation of those qualities depended upon the concord between the affections of the agent and those of the spectators.

The propriety of generosity and public spirit is founded upon the same principle with that of justice. Generosity is different from humanity. Those two qualities, which at first sight seem so nearly allied, do not always belong to the same person. Humanity is the virtue of a woman, generosity of a man. The fair sex, who have commonly much more tenderness than ours, have seldom so much generosity. That women rarely make considerable donations, is an observation of the civil law.[1] Humanity consists merely in the exquisite fellow-feeling which the spectator entertains with the sentiments of the persons principally concerned, so as to grieve for their sufferings, to resent their injuries, and to rejoice at their good fortune. The most humane actions require no self-denial, no self-command, no great exertion of the sense of propriety. They consist only in doing what this exquisite sympathy would of its own accord prompt us to do. But it is otherwise with generosity. We never are generous except when in some respect we prefer some other person to ourselves, and sacrifice some great and important interest of our own to an equal interest of a friend or of a superior. The man who gives up his pretensions to an office that was the

[1] *Raro mulieres donare solent.*

great object of his ambition, because he imagines that the services of another are better entitled to it; the man who exposes his life to defend that of his friend, which he judges to be of more importance, neither of them act from humanity, or because they feel more exquisitely what concerns that other person than what concerns themselves. They both consider those opposite interests, not in the light in which they naturally appear to themselves, but in that in which they appear to others. To every by-stander, the success or preservation of this other person may justly be more interesting than their own; but it cannot be so to themselves. When to the interest of this other person, therefore, they sacrifice their own, they accommodate themselves to the sentiments of the spectator, and by an effort of magnanimity act according to those views of things which they feel, must naturally occur to any third person. The soldier who throws away his life in order to defend that of his officer, would perhaps be but little affected by the death of that officer, if it should happen without any fault of his own; and a very small disaster which had befallen himself might excite a much more lively sorrow. But when he endeavours to act so as to deserve applause, and to make the impartial spectator enter into the principles of his conduct, he feels, that to everybody but himself, his own life is a trifle compared with that of his officer, and that when he sacrifices the one to the other, he acts quite properly and agreeably to what would be the natural apprehensions of every impartial by-stander.

It is the same case with the greater exertions of public spirit. When a young officer exposes his life to acquire some inconsiderable addition to the dominions of his sovereign, it is not because the acquisition of the new territory is, to himself, an object more desirable than the preservation of his own life. To him his own life is of infinitely more value than the conquest of a whole kingdom for the state which he serves. But when he compares those two objects with one another, he does not view them in the light in which they naturally appear to himself, but in that in which they appear to the nation he fights for. To them the success of the war is of the highest importance; the life of a private person of

scarce any consequence. When he puts himself in their situation, he immediately feels that he cannot be too prodigal of his blood, if, by shedding it, he can promote so valuable a purpose. In thus thwarting, from a sense of duty and propriety, the strongest of all natural propensities, consists the heroism of his conduct. There is many an honest Englishman, who, in his private station, would be more seriously disturbed by the loss of a guinea, than by the loss of Minorca, who yet, had it been in his power to defend that fortress, would have sacrificed his life a thousand times rather than, through his fault, have let it fall into the hands of the enemy. When the first Brutus led forth his own sons to a capital punishment, because they had conspired against the rising liberty of Rome, he sacrificed what, if he had consulted his own breast only, would appear to be the stronger to the weaker affection. Brutus ought naturally to have felt much more for the death of his own sons, than for all that probably Rome could have suffered from the want of so great an example. But he viewed them, not with the eyes of a father, but with those of a Roman citizen. He entered so thoroughly into the sentiments of this last character, that he paid no regard to that tie, by which he himself was connected with them; and to a Roman citizen the sons even of Brutus seemed contemptible, when put into the balance with the smallest interest of Rome. In these and in all other cases of this kind, our admiration is not so much founded upon the utility, as upon the unexpected, and on that account the great, the noble, and exalted propriety of such actions. This utility, when we come to view it, bestows upon them, undoubtedly, a new beauty, and upon that account still further recommends them to our approbation. This beauty, however, is chiefly perceived by men of reflection and speculation, and is by no means the quality which first recommends such actions to the natural sentiments of the bulk of mankind.

It is to be observed that so far as the sentiment of approbation arises from the perception of this beauty of utility, it has no reference of any kind to the sentiments of others. If it was possible, therefore, that a person should grow up to manhood without any communication with society, his own actions might,

notwithstanding, be agreeable or disagreeable to him on account of their tendency to his happiness or disadvantage. He might perceive a beauty of this kind in prudence, temperance, and good conduct, and a deformity in the opposite behaviour; he might view his own temper and character with that sort of satisfaction with which we consider a well-contrived machine, in the one case; or with that sort of distaste and dissatisfaction with which we regard a very awkward and clumsy contrivance, in the other. As these perceptions, however, are merely a matter of taste, and have all the feebleness and delicacy of that species of perceptions, upon the justness of which what is properly called taste is founded, they probably would not be much attended to by one in his solitary and miserable condition. Even though they should occur to him, they would by no means have the same effect upon him, antecedent to his connexion with society, which they would have in consequence of that connexion. He would not be cast down with inward shame at the thought of this deformity; nor would he be elevated with secret triumph of mind from the consciousness of the contrary beauty. He would not exult from the notion of deserving reward in the one case, nor tremble from the suspicion of meriting punishment in the other. All such sentiments suppose the idea of some other being, who is the natural judge of the person that feels them; and it is only by sympathy with the decisions of this arbiter of his conduct, that he can conceive, either the triumph of self-applause, or the shame of self-condemnation.

CLAUDE ADRIEN HELVÉTIUS

(1715-1771)

DE L'ESPRIT, OR, ESSAYS ON THE MIND

Translated from the French by*

WILLIAM MUDFORD

Essay II. *PROBITY*

CHAPTER II. PROBITY IN RELATION TO THE INDIVIDUAL

It is not real *probity;* that is *probity* with regard to the public, that I consider in this chapter; but merely *probity* considered relatively to each individual.

In this point of view, I say, that each individual calls probity in another only the habitual performance of actions which are useful to him: I say habitual performance, because it is not one single honest action, more than one single ingenious idea, that will gain us the title of virtuous and witty. There is not that penurious wretch on earth which has not once behaved with generosity; nor a liberal person who has not once been parsimonious; no villain who has not done a good action; no person so stupid who has not uttered one smart sentence; and, in fine, no man who, on inspecting certain actions of his life, will not seem possessed of all the opposite virtues and vices. A greater uniformity in the behaviour of men would suppose in them a continuity of attention which they are incapable of; differing from one another only more or less. The man of absolute uniformity has no existence; for that no perfection, either with regard to vice or virtue, is to be found on the earth.

It is therefore to the habitual performance of actions advantageous to him that an individual gives the name of *probity:*

* From *De L'esprit,* Paris, 1758. Reprinted from C. A. Helvétius, *De L'esprit,* or, *Essays on the Mind,* (tr.) London, 1807; new ed. *ib.* 1810.

I say of actions, because we cannot judge of intentions. How is it possible? It is seldom or never that action is the effect of a sentiment; we ourselves are often ignorant of the motives by which we are determined. A rich man bestows a comfortable subsistence on a worthy man reduced to poverty. Doubtless he does a good action; but is this action simply the effect of a desire of rendering a man happy? Pity, the hopes of gratitude, vanity itself, all these different motives, separately or aggregately, may they not unknown to himself have determined him to that commendable action? Now if a man be in general ignorant himself of the motives of his generous action, how can the public be acquainted with them? Thus it is only from the actions of men, that the public can judge of their probity. A man for instance has twenty degrees of passion for virtue; but he has thirty degrees of love for a woman; and this woman would instigate him to be guilty of murder. Upon this supposition, it is certain that this person is nearer guilt than he who, with only ten degrees of passion for virtue, has only five degrees of love for so wicked a woman. Hence I conclude that of two men the more honest in his actions has sometimes the less passion for virtue.

Every philosopher also agrees that the virtue of men greatly depends on the circumstances in which they are placed. Virtuous men have too often sunk under a strange series of unhappy events.

He who will warrant his virtue in every possible situation is either an impostor or a fool; characters equally to be mistrusted.

After determining the idea I affix to this word *probity*, considered in relation to every individual, we must, to assure ourselves of the propriety of this definition, have recourse to observation; and this will inform us that there are men whom a happy disposition, a strong desire of glory and esteem, inspire with the same love for justice and virtue, which men in general have for riches and honours.

The actions personally advantageous to these virtuous men are so truly just that they tend to promote the general welfare, or, at least not to lessen it.

But the number of these men is so small that I only mention

them in honour of humanity. And the most numerous class, which alone comprehends the far greater part of mankind, is that of men so entirely devoted to their own interest that they never consider the welfare of the whole. Concentrated, if I may be allowed the expression, in their own happiness, these men call those actions only honest, which are advantageous to themselves. A judge acquits a criminal, a minister prefers an unworthy person; yet both are just if those they have favoured may be credited. But should the judge punish and the minister refuse, the criminal and the party denied will always consider them as unjust.

If the monks, who, during the first dynasty, were entrusted to write the lives of our kings, have only given those of their benefactors, indicating the other reigns only with these words, NIHIL FECIT; and if they have given the name of slothful kings to some princes truly worthy of esteem, it is because a monk is a man, and every man, in his judgment, consults only his own interest.

The Christians, who justly branded with the name of barbarity and guilt the cruelties inflicted on them by the pagans, did not they give the name of zeal to the cruelties they in their turn inflicted on those same pagans? It will, on examination, be found that there is not a crime but is placed among honest actions by the societies to which this crime is advantageous; nor an action of public benefit that is not censured by some particular society to which it is detrimental.

In effect, what man, if he sacrifices the pride of styling himself more virtuous than others, to the pride of being more sincere; and if with a scrupulous attention he searches all the recesses of his soul, will not perceive that his virtues and vices are wholly owing to the different modifications of personal interest; that all equally tend to their happiness; that it is the diversity of the passions and tastes, of which some are agreeable, and others contrary to the public interest, which terms our actions either virtues or vices? Instead of despising the vicious man, we should pity him, rejoice in our own happy disposition, thank heaven for not having given us any of those tastes and passions, which would have forced us to have sought our happi-

ness in the misery of another. For after all interest is always obeyed; hence the injustice of all our judgments, and the appellations of just and unjust are lavished on the same actions according to the advantage resulting from them to particulars.

If the physical universe be subject to the laws of motion, the moral universe is equally so to those of interest. Interest is on earth the mighty magician which to the eyes of every creature changes the appearance of all objects. Thus different interests metamorphose objects: we consider the lion as a cruel animal, whereas, among the insects, it is the sheep; and what Leibnitz said of the physical universe may be applied to the moral. That this world, being constantly in motion, every instant offers a new and different phenomenon to each of its inhabitants.

This principle is so agreeable to experience, that, without entering into a farther discussion, I think myself warranted to conclude that personal interest is the only and universal estimator of the merit of human actions; and therefore that probity with regard to an individual is, according to my definition, nothing more than the habitual performance of actions personally advantageous to this individual.

CHAPTER XI. PROBITY IN RELATION TO THE PUBLIC

I shall not in this chapter treat of probity with respect to a particular person or a private society; but of true probity, of probity considered in relation to the public. This kind of probity is the only one that really merits, and has in general obtained the name. It is only considering it in this point of view that we can form clear ideas of honesty and discover a guide to virtue.

Now under this aspect I say that the public, like particular societies, is only determined in its judgments by motives of interest; that it does not give the name of noble to great and heroic actions, but to those that are of public use; and that the esteem of the public for such and such an action is not proportioned to the degree of strength, courage, or generosity, necessary to

execute it, but to the importance of that action, and the public advantage derived from it.

In fact when encouraged by the presence of an army, one man alone fights three men who are wounded: this is doubtless a brave action; but it is what a thousand of our grenadiers are capable of and for which they will never be mentioned in history; but when the safety of an empire formed to subdue the universe depends on the success of this battle, Horatius is a hero, he is the admiration of his fellow-citizens, and his name, celebrated in history, is handed down to the most distant ages.

Two persons threw themselves into a gulf; this was an action common to Sappho and Curtius; but the first did it to put an end to the torments of love, and the other to save Rome; Sappho was therefore a fool, and Curtius a hero. In vain have some philosophers given the name of folly to each of these actions; the public sees clearer than they, and never gives the name of fool to those from whom it receives advantage.

CHAPTER XIII. PROBITY IN RELATION TO VARIOUS AGES AND NATIONS

In all ages and nations probity can be only a habit of performing actions that are of use to our country. However certain this proposition may be, to render this truth the more evident, I shall endeavour to give a clear and full idea of this virtue.

To this purpose, I shall examine two sentiments on this subject, that have hitherto divided the moralists.

Some maintain that we have an idea of virtue absolutely independent of different ages and governments; and that virtue is always one and the same. The others maintain on the contrary that every nation forms a different idea of it.

The first bring in proof of their opinions the ingenious but unintelligible dreams of the Platonists. Virtue according to them is nothing but the idea of order, harmony, and essential beauty. But this beauty is a mystery of which they can convey no fixed ideas: they therefore do not establish their system

on the knowledge which history affords us of the human heart, and the powers of the mind.

The second, and amongst them Montaigne, with arms more strangely tempered than those of reasoning, that is, with facts, attack the opinion of the first; prove that an action virtuous in the north, is vicious in the south; and from thence conclude, that the idea of virtue is merely arbitrary.

Such are the opinions of these two sects of philosophers. Those, from their not having consulted history, err in a metaphysical labyrinth of words: these, from their not having examined with sufficient depth the facts presented by history, have thought that caprice alone decided the goodness or turpitude of human actions. These two philosophical sects are deceived; but they would both have escaped error had they with an attentive eye considered the history of the world. They would then have perceived that time must necessarily produce in the physical and moral world revolutions that change the face of empires; that in the great catastrophes of kingdoms, the peoples always experience great changes; that the same actions may successively become useful and prejudicial, and consequently, by turns, assume the name of virtuous and vicious.

If in consequence of this observation they would have been willing to form a mere abstract idea of virtue, independent of practice, they would have acknowledged that, by the word virtue can only be understood, a desire of the general happiness; that consequently the public welfare is the object of virtue; and that the actions it enjoins are the means it makes use of to accomplish that end; that therefore the idea of virtue is not arbitrary; that in different ages and countries all men, at least those who live in society, ought to form the same idea of it; and in short if the people represent it under different forms, it is because they take for virtue the various means they employ to accomplish the end.

This definition of virtue I think gives an idea of it that is at once clear, simple, and conformable to experience; a conformity that alone can establish the truth of an opinion.

The pyramid of Venus-Urania, whose top was lost in the

clouds and whose base was fixed on the earth, is the emblem of all systems which crumble to pieces as fast as they are built, if they are not founded on the steady basis of facts and experience. It is therefore on facts, that is, on the hitherto inexplicable folly and fantastical character of the various laws and customs, that I establish the proof of my opinion.

However stupid we suppose mankind, it is certain that enlightened by their own interest they have not without motives adopted the ridiculous customs we find established amongst some of them. The fantastical nature of these customs proceeds then from the diversity of the interests of different nations. In fact if they have always, though confusedly, understood by the word virtue the desire of the public happiness; if they have consequently given the name of honesty only to actions useful to the nation; and if the idea of utility has always been secretly connected with the idea of virtue, we may assert, that the most ridiculous, and even the most cruel customs, have always had, for their foundation, as I am going to show by some examples, either a real or apparent utility with respect to the public welfare.

Theft was permitted at Sparta; they only punished the awkwardness of the thief who was surprised: could anything be more absurd than this custom? However, if we call to mind the laws of Lycurgus, and the contempt shown for gold and silver in a country where the laws allowed the circulation of no other money than that of a kind of heavy brittle iron, it will appear that poultry and pulse were almost the only things that could be stolen. These thefts being always performed with address and frequently denied with firmness, they enured the Lacedemonians to a habit of courage and vigilance: the law then which allowed of stealing, might be very useful to that people, who had as much reason to be afraid of the treachery of the Ilotes, as of the ambition of the Persians; and could only oppose against the attempts of the one, and the innumerable armies of the other, the bulwark of these two virtues. It is therefore certain that theft, which is always prejudicial to a rich people, was of use to Sparta and therefore properly honoured.

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In conformity with my reasonings, all the facts I have just cited concur to prove that the customs, even the most foolish and the most cruel, have always their source in the real or apparent utility of the public.

But it is said that these customs are not on this account the less odious or ridiculous. It is true. But it is only because we are ignorant of the motives of their establishment; and because these customs consecrated by antiquity and superstition subsisted here by negligence, or the weakness of government, long after the causes of their establishment were removed.

When France was in a manner only a vast forest, who doubts that those donations of uncultivated lands made to the religious orders ought then to have been permitted: and that the prolongation of such a permission would not now be as absurd and injurious to the state, as it might be wise and useful when France was uncultivated? All the customs that procure only transient advantages are like scaffolds that should be pulled down when the palaces are raised.

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The interest of states like all human things is subject to a thousand revolutions. The same laws and the same customs become successively useful and prejudicial to the same people; whence I conclude that these laws ought by turns to be adopted and rejected, and that the same actions ought successively to bear the names of virtuous and vicious; a proposition that cannot be denied without confessing that there are actions, which at one and the same time are virtuous and prejudicial to the state, and consequently without sapping the foundations of all government and all society.

The general conclusion of all I have just said is, that virtue is only the desire of the happiness of mankind; and that *probity*, which I consider as virtue put into action, is among all people, and in all the various governments of the world, only the habit of performing actions useful to our country.

WILLIAM PALEY

(1743-1805)

THE PRINCIPLES OF MORAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY*

BOOK I. CHAPTER VII

VIRTUE is, "the doing good to mankind, in obedience to the will of God, and for the sake of everlasting happiness."

According to which definition, "the good of mankind" is the subject, the "will of God" the rule, and "everlasting happiness" the motive of human virtue.

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BOOK II. CHAPTER I

Why am I obliged to keep my word? Because it is right, says one. — Because it is agreeable to the fitness of things, says another. — Because it is conformable to reason and nature, says a third. — Because it is conformable to truth, says a fourth. — Because it promotes the public good, says a fifth. — Because it is required by the will of God, concludes a sixth.

Upon which different accounts, two things are observable:

FIRST, that they all ultimately coincide.

The fitness of things means their fitness to produce happiness: the nature of things means that actual constitution of the world, by which some things, as such and such actions, for example, produce happiness, and others misery: reason is the principle, by which we discover or judge of this constitution: truth is this judgment expressed or drawn out into propositions. So that it necessarily comes to pass, that what promotes the public happiness, or happiness upon the whole, is agreeable to the fitness of things, to nature, to reason, and to truth; and such (as

* First edition, London, 1785.

will appear by and by) is the divine character, that what promotes the general happiness is required by the will of God; and what has all the above properties must needs be right: for right means no more than conformity to the rule we go by, whatever that rule be. And this is the reason that moralists, from whatever different principles they set out, commonly meet in their conclusions; that is, they enjoin the same conduct, prescribe the same rules of duty, and, with a few exceptions, deliver upon dubious cases the same determinations.

SECONDLY, it is to be observed, that these answers all leave the matter short; for the enquirer may turn round upon his teacher with a second question, in which he will expect to be satisfied, namely, why am I obliged to do what is right; to act agreeably to the fitness of things; to conform to reason, nature, or truth; to promote the public good, or to obey the will of God?

The proper method of conducting the enquiry is, FIRST, to examine what we mean, when we say a man is obliged to do any thing, and THEN to shew why he is obliged to do the thing which we have proposed as an example, namely, "to keep his word."

CHAPTER II

A man is said to be obliged, "when he is urged by a violent motive resulting from the command of another."

I. "The motive must be violent." If a person, who has done me some little service, or has a small place in his disposal, ask me for my vote upon some occasion, I may possibly give it him, from a motive of gratitude or expectation; but I should hardly say, that I was obliged to give it him, because the inducement does not rise high enough. Whereas, if a father or a master, any great benefactor, or one on whom my fortune depends, require my vote, I give it him of course; and my answer to all who ask me why I voted so and so, is, that my father or my master obliged me; that I had received so many favours from, or had so great a dependence upon such a one, that I was obliged to vote as he directed me.

SECONDLY, "It must result from the command of another." Offer a man a gratuity for doing any thing, for seizing, for example, an offender, he is not obliged by your offer to do it; nor would he say he is; though he may be induced, persuaded, prevailed upon, tempted. If a magistrate, or the man's immediate superior command it, he considers himself as obliged to comply, though possibly he would lose less by a refusal in this case, than in the former. I will not undertake to say that the words obligation and obliged are used uniformly in this sense, or always with this distinction; nor is it possible to tie down popular phrases to any constant signification: but, wherever the motive is violent enough, and coupled with the idea of command, authority, law, or the will of a superior, there, I take it, we always reckon ourselves to be obliged.

And from this account of obligation it follows, that we can be obliged to nothing, but what we ourselves are to gain or lose something by; for nothing else can be a "violent motive" to us. As we should not be obliged to obey the laws, or the magistrate, unless rewards or punishments, pleasure or pain, somehow or other depended upon our obedience; so neither should we, without the same reason, be obliged to do what is right, to practise virtue, or to obey the commands of God.

CHAPTER III

Let it be remembered, that to be obliged, "is to be urged by a violent motive, resulting from the command of another." And then let it be asked, Why am I obliged to keep my word? and the answer will be, because I am "urged to do so by a violent motive," (namely, the expectation of being after this life rewarded, if I do, or punished for it, if I do not) "resulting from the command of another," (namely, of God). This solution goes to the bottom of the subject, as no farther question can reasonably be asked.

Therefore, private happiness is our motive, and the will of God our rule.

When I first turned my thoughts to moral speculations, an air of mystery seemed to hang over the whole subject; which arose, I believe, from hence — that I supposed, with many authors whom I had read, that to be obliged to do a thing, was very different from being induced only to do it; and that the obligation to practise virtue, to do what is right, just, etc., was quite another thing, and of another kind, than the obligation which a soldier is under to obey his officer, a servant his master, or any of the civil and ordinary obligations of human life. Whereas, from what has been said it appears, that moral obligation is like all other obligations; and that all obligation is nothing more than an inducement of sufficient strength, and resulting, in some way, from the command of another.

There is always understood to be a difference between an act of prudence and an act of duty. Thus, if I distrusted a man who owed me money, I should reckon it an act of prudence to get another bound with him; but I should hardly call it an act of duty. On the other hand, it would be thought a very unusual and loose kind of language, to say, that, as I had made such a promise, it was prudent to perform it; or that as my friend, when he went abroad, placed a box of jewels in my hands, it would be prudent in me to preserve it for him till he returned.

Now, in what, you will ask, does the difference consist? Inasmuch, as according to our account of the matter, both in the one case and the other, in acts of duty as well as acts of prudence, we consider solely what we shall gain or lose by the act? The difference, and the only difference, is this; that, in the one case we consider what we shall gain or lose in the present world; in the other case, we consider also what we shall gain or lose in the world to come.

Those who would establish a system of morality, independent of a future state, must look out for some different idea of moral obligation; unless they can show that virtue conducts the possessor to certain happiness in this life, or to a much greater share of it, than he could attain by a different behaviour.

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JEREMY BENTHAM

(1748–1832)

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PRINCIPLES OF MORALS AND LEGISLATION*

CHAPTER I. OF THE PRINCIPLE OF UTILITY

1. NATURE has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters, *pain* and *pleasure*. It is for them alone to point out what we ought to do, as well as to determine what we shall do. On the one hand the standard of right and wrong, on the other the chain of causes and effects, are fastened to their throne. They govern us in all we do, in all we say, in all we think; every effort we can make to throw off our subjection, will serve but to demonstrate and confirm it. In words a man may pretend to abjure their empire: but in reality he will remain subject to it all the while. The *principle of utility* [1] recognizes the subjection, and assumes it for the foundation of that system, the object of which is to rear the fabric of felicity by the hands of reason and of law. Systems which attempt to question it, deal in sounds instead of sense, in caprice instead of reason, in darkness instead of light.

* First printed, London, 1780; first published, *ib.* 1789; corr. ed. *ib.* 1823.

[1] Note by the Author, July, 1812.

To this denomination has of late been added, or substituted, the *greatest happiness* or *greatest felicity* principle: this for shortness, instead of saying at length *that principle* which states the greatest happiness of all those whose interest is in question, as being the right and proper, and only right and proper and universally desirable, end of human action: of human action in every situation, and in particular in that of a functionary or set of functionaries exercising the powers of government. The word *utility* does not so clearly point to the ideas of *pleasure* and *pain* as the words *happiness* and *felicity* do: nor does it lead us to the consideration of the *number*, of the interests affected; to the *number*, as being the circumstance, which contributes, in the largest proportion, to the formation of the standard here in question; the *standard of right and wrong*, by which alone the propriety of human conduct, in every situation, can with propriety be tried. This want of a sufficiently manifest connexion between the ideas of *happiness* and *pleasure* on the one hand, and the idea of *utility* on the other, I have every now and then found operating, and with but too much efficiency, as a bar to the acceptance, that might otherwise have been given, to this principle.

But enough of metaphor and declamation: it is not by such means that moral science is to be improved.

II. The principle of utility is the foundation of the present work; it will be proper therefore at the outset to give an explicit and determinate account of what is meant by it. By the principle of utility is meant that principle which approves or disapproves of every action whatsoever, according to the tendency which it appears to have to augment or diminish the happiness of the party whose interest is in question; or, what is the same thing in other words, to promote or to oppose that happiness. I say of every action whatsoever; and therefore not only of every action of a private individual, but of every measure of government.

III. By utility is meant that property in any object, whereby it tends to produce benefit, advantage, pleasure, good, or happiness, (all this in the present case comes to the same thing) or (what comes again to the same thing) to prevent the happening of mischief, pain, evil, or unhappiness to the party whose interest is considered: if that party be the community in general, then the happiness of the community: if a particular individual, then the happiness of that individual.

IV. The interest of the community is one of the most general expressions that can occur in the phraseology of morals: no wonder that the meaning of it is often lost. When it has a meaning, it is this. The community is a fictitious *body*, composed of the individual persons who are considered as constituting as it were its *members*. The interest of the community then is, what? — the sum of the interests of the several members who compose it.

V. It is in vain to talk of the interest of the community, without understanding what is the interest of the individual. A thing is said to promote the interest, or to be *for* the interest, of an individual, when it tends to add to the sum total of his pleasures: or, what comes to the same thing, to diminish the sum total of his pains.

VI. An action then may be said to be conformable to the principle of utility, or, for shortness' sake, to utility, (meaning with respect to the community at large) when the tendency it has to

augment the happiness of the community is greater than any it has to diminish it.

VII. A measure of government (which is but a particular kind of action, performed by a particular person or persons) may be said to be conformable to or dictated by the principle of utility, when in like manner the tendency which it has to augment the happiness of the community is greater than any which it has to diminish it.

VIII. When an action, or in particular a measure of government, is supposed by a man to be conformable to the principle of utility, it may be convenient, for the purposes of discourse, to imagine a kind of law or dictate, called a law or dictate of utility: and to speak of the action in question, as being conformable to such law or dictate.

IX. A man may be said to be a partizan of the principle of utility, when the approbation or disapprobation he annexes to any action, or to any measure, is determined by and proportioned to the tendency which he conceives it to have to augment or to diminish the happiness of the community: or in other words, to its conformity or unconformity to the laws or dictates of utility.

X. Of an action that is conformable to the principle of utility, one may always say either that it is one that ought to be done, or at least that it is not one that ought not to be done. One may say also, that it is right it should be done; at least that it is not wrong it should be done: that it is a right action; at least that it is not a wrong action. When thus interpreted, the words *ought*, and *right* and *wrong*, and others of that stamp, have a meaning: when otherwise, they have none.

XI. Has the rectitude of this principle been ever formally contested? It should seem that it had, by those who have not known what they have been meaning. Is it susceptible of any direct proof? It should seem not, for that which is used to prove everything else, cannot itself be proved; a chain of proofs must have their commencement somewhere. To give such proof is as impossible as it is needless.

XII. Not that there is or ever has been that human creature breathing, however stupid or perverse, who has not on many,

perhaps on most occasions of his life, deferred to it. By the natural constitution of the human frame, on most occasions of their lives men in general embrace this principle, without thinking of it; if not for the ordering of their own actions, yet for the trying of their own actions, as well as of those of other men. There have been, at the same time, not many, perhaps, even of the most intelligent, who have been disposed to embrace it purely and without reserve. There are even few who have not taken some occasion or other to quarrel with it, either on account of their not understanding always how to apply it, or on account of some prejudice or other which they were afraid to examine into, or could not bear to part with. For such is the stuff that man is made of: in principle and in practice, in a right track and in a wrong one, the rarest of all human qualities is consistency.

XIII. When a man attempts to combat the principle of utility, it is with reasons drawn, without his being aware of it, from that very principle itself. His arguments, if they prove anything, prove not that the principle is *wrong*, but that, according to the applications he supposes to be made of it, it is *misapplied*. Is it possible for a man to move the earth? Yes; but he must first find out another earth to stand upon.

To disprove the propriety of it by arguments is impossible; but, from the causes that have been mentioned, or from some confused or partial view of it, a man may happen to be disposed not to relish it. Where this is the case, if he thinks the settling of his opinions on such a subject worth the trouble, let him take the following steps, and at length, perhaps, he may come to reconcile himself to it.

1. Let him settle with himself, whether he would wish to discard this principle altogether; if so, let him consider what it is that all his reasonings (in matters of politics especially) can amount to?

2. If he would, let him settle with himself, whether he would judge and act without any principle, or whether there is any other he would judge and act by?

3. If there be, let him examine and satisfy himself whether the principle he thinks he has found is really any separate intelligible principle; or whether it be not a mere principle in

words, a kind of phrase, which at bottom expresses neither more nor less than the mere averment of his own unfounded sentiments; that is, what in another person he might be apt to call caprice?

4. If he is inclined to think that his own approbation or disapprobation, annexed to the idea of an act, without any regard to its consequences, is a sufficient foundation for him to judge and act upon, let him ask himself whether his sentiment is to be a standard of right and wrong, with respect to every other man, or whether every man's sentiment has the same privilege of being a standard to itself?

5. In the first case, let him ask himself whether his principle is not despotical, and hostile to all the rest of the human race?

6. In the second case, whether it is not anarchical, and whether at this rate there are not as many different standards of right and wrong as there are men? and whether even to the same man, the same thing, which is right to-day, may not (without the least change in its nature) be wrong to-morrow? and whether the same thing is not right and wrong in the same place at the same time? and in either case, whether all argument is not at an end? and whether, when two men have said, "I like this," and "I don't like it," they can (upon such principle) have anything more to say?

7. If he should have said to himself, No: for that the sentiment which he proposes as a standard must be grounded on reflection, let him say on what particulars the reflection is to turn? if on particulars having relation to the utility of the act, then let him say whether this is not deserting his own principle, and borrowing assistance from that very one in opposition to which he sets it up: or if not on those particulars, on what other particulars?

8. If he should be for compounding the matter, and adopting his own principle in part, and the principle of utility in part, let him say how far he will adopt it?

9. When he has settled with himself where he will stop, then let him ask himself how he justifies to himself the adopting it so far? and why he will not adopt it any farther?

10. Admitting any other principle than the principle of

utility to be a right principle, a principle that it is right for a man to pursue; admitting (what is not true) that the word *right* can have a meaning without reference to utility, let him say whether there is any such thing as a *motive* that a man can have to pursue the dictates of it: if there is, let him say what that motive is, and how it is to be distinguished from those which enforce the dictates of utility: if not, then lastly let him say what it is this other principle can be good for?

CHAPTER II. OF PRINCIPLES ADVERSE TO THAT OF UTILITY

I. If the principle of utility be a right principle to be governed by, and that in all cases, it follows from what has been just observed, that whatever principle differs from it in any case must necessarily be a wrong one. To prove any other principle, therefore, to be a wrong one, there needs no more than just to show it to be what it is, a principle of which the dictates are in some point or other different from those of the principle of utility: to state it is to confute it.

II. A principle may be different from that of utility in two ways: 1. By being constantly opposed to it: this is the case with a principle whch may be termed the principle of *asceticism.* 2. By being sometimes opposed to it, and sometimes not, as it may happen: this is the case with another, which may be termed the principle of *sympathy* and *antipathy.*

III. By the principle of asceticism I mean that principle, which, like the principle of utility, approves or disapproves of any action, according to the tendency which it appears to have to augment or diminish the happiness of the party whose interest is in question; but in an inverse manner: approving of actions in as far as they tend to diminish his happiness; disapproving of them in as far as they tend to augment it.

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IX. The principle of asceticism seems originally to have been the reverie of certain hasty speculators, who having perceived,

or fancied, that certain pleasures, when reaped in certain circumstances, have, at the long run, been attended with pains more than equivalent to them, took occasion to quarrel with everything that offered itself under the name of pleasure. Having then got thus far, and having forgot the point which they set out from, they pushed on, and went so much further as to think it meritorious to fall in love with pain. Even this, we see, is at bottom but the principle of utility misapplied.

x. The principle of utility is capable of being consistently pursued; and it is but tautology to say, that the more consistently it is pursued, the better it must ever be for humankind. The principle of asceticism never was, nor ever can be, consistently pursued by any living creature. Let but one tenth part of the inhabitants of this earth pursue it consistently, and in a day's time they will have turned it into a hell.

xi. Among principles adverse to that of utility, that which at this day seems to have most influence in matters of government, is what may be called the principle of sympathy and antipathy. By the principle of sympathy and antipathy, I mean that principle which approves or disapproves of certain actions, not on account of their tending to augment the happiness, nor yet on account of their tending to diminish the happiness of the party whose interest is in question, but merely because a man finds himself disposed to approve or disapprove of them: holding up that approbation or disapprobation as a sufficient reason for itself, and disclaiming the necessity of looking out for any extrinsic ground. Thus far in the general department of morals; and in the particular department of politics, measuring out the quantum (as well as determining the ground) of punishment, by the degree of the disapprobation.

xii. It is manifest, that this is rather a principle in name than in reality; it is not a positive principle of itself, so much as a term employed to signify the negation of all principle. What one expects to find in a principle is something that points out some external consideration, as a means of warranting and guiding the internal sentiments of approbation and disapprobation; this expectation is but ill fulfilled by a proposition, which does

neither more nor less than hold up each of those sentiments as a ground and standard for itself.

XIII. In looking over the catalogue of human actions (says a partizan of this principle) in order to determine which of them are to be marked with the seal of disapprobation, you need but to take counsel of your own feelings: whatever you find in yourself a propensity to condemn, is wrong for that very reason. For the same reason it is also meet for punishment: in what proportion it is adverse to utility, or whether it be adverse to utility at all, is a matter that makes no difference. In that same *proportion* also is it meet for punishment; if you hate much, punish much; if you hate little, punish little; punish as you hate. If you hate not at all, punish not at all; the fine feelings of the soul are not to be overborne and tyrannized by the harsh and rugged dictates of political utility.

XIV. The various systems that have been formed concerning the standard of right and wrong, may all be reduced to the principle of sympathy and antipathy. One account may serve for all of them. They consist all of them in so many contrivances for avoiding the obligation of appealing to any external standard, and for prevailing upon the reader to accept of the author's sentiment or opinion as a reason for itself. The phrases different, but the principle the same.[1]

[1] It is curious enough to observe the variety of inventions men have hit upon, and the variety of phrases they have brought forward, in order to conceal from the world, and, if possible, from themselves, this very general and therefore very pardonable self-sufficiency.

1. One man says, he has a thing made on purpose to tell him what is right and what is wrong; and that it is called a *moral sense:* and then he goes to work at his ease, and says, such a thing is right, and such a thing is wrong — why? "because my moral sense tells me it is."

2. Another man comes and alters the phrase: leaving out *moral*, and putting in *common*, in the room of it. He then tells you, that his common sense teaches him what is right and wrong, as surely as the other's moral sense did: meaning by common sense, a sense of some kind or other, which, he says, is possessed by all mankind: the sense of those, whose sense is not the same as the author's, being struck out of the account as not worth taking. This contrivance does better than the other; for a moral sense, being a new thing, a man may feel about him a good while without being able to find it out: but common sense is as old as the creation; and there is no man but would be ashamed to be thought not to have as much of it as his neighbours. It has another great advantage: by appear-

xv. It is manifest, that the dictates of this principle will frequently coincide with those of utility, though perhaps without intending any such thing. Probably more frequently than not: and hence it is that the business of penal justice is carried on upon that tolerable sort of footing upon which we see it carried on in common at this day. For what more natural or more

ing to share power, it lessens envy: for when a man gets up upon this ground, in order to anathematize those who differ from him, it is not by a *sic volo sic jubeo*, but by a *velitis jubeatis*.

3. Another man comes, and says, that as to a moral sense indeed, he cannot find that he has any such thing: that however he has an *understanding*, which will do quite as well. This understanding, he says, is the standard of right and wrong: it tells him so and so. All good and wise men understand as he does: if other men's understandings differ in any point from his, so much the worse for them: it is a sure sign they are either defective or corrupt.

4. Another man says, that there is an eternal and immutable Rule of Right: that that rule of right dictates so and so: and then he begins giving you his sentiments upon anything that comes uppermost: and these sentiments (you are to take for granted) are so many branches of the eternal rule of right.

5. Another man, or perhaps the same man (it's no matter) says, that there are certain practices conformable, and others repugnant, to the Fitness of Things; and then he tells you, at his leisure, what practices are conformable and what repugnant: just as he happens to like a practice or dislike it.

6. A great multitude of people are continually talking of the Law of Nature; and then they go on giving you their sentiments about what is right and what is wrong: and these sentiments, you are to understand, are so many chapters and sections of the Law of Nature.

7. Instead of the phrase, Law of Nature, you have sometimes, Law of Reason, Right Reason, Natural Justice, Natural Equity, Good Order. Any of them will do equally well. This latter is most used in politics. The last three are much more tolerable than the others, because they do not very explicitly claim to be anything more than phrases; they insist but feebly upon the being looked upon as so many positive standards of themselves, and seem content to be taken, upon occasion, for phrases expressive of the conformity of the thing in question to the proper standard, whatever that may be. On most occasions, however, it will be better to say *utility: utility* is clearer, as referring more explicitly to pain and pleasure.

8. We have one philosopher, who says, there is no harm in anything in the world but in telling a lie: and that if, for example, you were to murder your own father, this would only be a particular way of saying, he was not your father. Of course, when this philosopher sees anything that he does not like, he says, it is a particular way of telling a lie. It is saying, that the act ought to be done, or may be done, when, *in truth*, it ought not to be done.

9. The fairest and openest of them all is that sort of man who speaks out, and says, I am of the number of the Elect: now God himself takes care to inform the Elect what is right: and that with so good effect, that let them strive ever so, they cannot help not only knowing it but practising it. If therefore a man wants to know what is right and what is wrong, he has nothing to do but to come to me. . . .

general ground of hatred to a practice can there be, than the mischievousness of such practice? What all men are exposed to suffer by, all men will be disposed to hate. It is far yet, however, from being a constant ground: for when a man suffers, it is not always that he knows what it is he suffers by. A man may suffer grievously, for instance, by a new tax, without being able to trace up the cause of his sufferings to the injustice of some neighbour, who has eluded the payment of an old one.

XVIII. It may be wondered, perhaps, that in all this while no mention has been made of the *theological* principle; meaning that principle which professes to recur for the standard of right and wrong to the will of God. But the case is, this is not in fact a distinct principle. It is never anything more or less than one or other of the three before-mentioned principles presenting itself under another shape. The *will* of God here meant cannot be his revealed will, as contained in the sacred writings: for that is a system which nobody ever thinks of recurring to at this time of day, for the details of political administration: and even before it can be applied to the details of private conduct, it is universally allowed, by the most eminent divines of all persuasions, to stand in need of pretty ample interpretations; else to what use are the works of those divines? And for the guidance of these interpretations, it is also allowed, that some other standard must be assumed. The will then which is meant on this occasion, is that which may be called the *presumptive* will: that is to say, that which is presumed to be his will on account of the conformity of its dictates to those of some other principle. What then may be this other principle? it must be one or other of the three mentioned above; for there cannot, as we have seen, be any more. It is plain, therefore, that, setting revelation out of the question, no light can ever be thrown upon the standard of right and wrong, by anything that can be said upon the question, what is God's will. We may be perfectly sure, indeed, that whatever is right is conformable to the will of God; but so far is that from answering the purpose of showing us what is right, that it is necessary to know first whether a thing is right, in order to know from thence whether it be conformable to the will of God.

XIX. There are two things which are very apt to be confounded, but which it imports us carefully to distinguish: — the motive or cause, which, by operating on the mind of an individual, is productive of any act, and the ground or reason which warrants a legislator, or other by-stander, in regarding that act with an eye of approbation. When the act happens, in the particular instance in question, to be productive of effects which we approve of, much more if we happen to observe that the same motive may frequently be productive, in other instances, of the like effects, we are apt to transfer our approbation to the motive itself, and to assume, as the just ground for the approbation we bestow on the act, the circumstance of its originating from that motive. It is in this way that the sentiment of antipathy has often been considered as a just ground of action. Antipathy, for instance, in such or such a case, is the cause of an action which is attended with good effects; but this does not make it a right ground of action in that case, any more than in any other. Still farther. Not only the effects are good, but the agent sees beforehand that they will be so. This may make the action indeed a perfectly right action: but it does not make antipathy a right ground for action. For the same sentiment of antipathy, if implicitly deferred to, may be, and very frequently is, productive of the very worst effects. Antipathy, therefore, can never be a right ground of action. No more, therefore, can resentment, which, as will be seen more particularly hereafter, is but a modification of antipathy. The only right ground of action, that can possibly subsist, is, after all, the consideration of utility, which, if it is a right principle of action, and of approbation, in any one case, is so in every other. Other principles in abundance, that is, other motives, may be the reasons why such and such an act *has* been done, that is, the reasons or causes of its being done; but it is this alone that can be the reason why it might or ought to have been done. Antipathy or resentment requires always to be regulated, to prevent its doing mischief: to be regulated by what? always by the principle of utility. The principle of utility neither requires nor admits of any other regulator than itself.

CHAPTER III. OF THE FOUR SANCTIONS OR SOURCES OF PAIN AND PLEASURE

I. It has been shown that the happiness of the individuals, of whom a community is composed, that is their pleasures and their security, is the end and the sole end which the legislator ought to have in view: the sole standard, in conformity to which each individual ought, as far as depends upon the legislator, to be *made* to fashion his behaviour. But whether it be this or anything else that is to be *done*, there is nothing by which a man can ultimately be *made* to do it, but either pain or pleasure. Having taken a general view of these two grand objects (*viz.* pleasure, and what comes to the same thing, immunity from pain) in the character of *final* causes; it will be necessary to take a view of pleasure and pain itself, in the character of *efficient* causes or means.

II. There are four distinguishable sources from which pleasure and pain are in use to flow: considered separately, they may be termed the *physical*, the *political*, the *moral*, and the *religious:* and inasmuch as the pleasures and pains belonging to each of them are capable of giving a binding force to any law or rule of conduct, they may all of them be termed *sanctions*.

III. If it be in the present life, and from the ordinary course of nature, not purposely modified by the interposition of the will of any human being, nor by any extraordinary interposition of any superior invisible being, that the pleasure or the pain takes place or is expected, it may be said to issue from or to belong to the *physical sanction*.

IV. If at the hands of a *particular* person or set of persons in the community, who under names correspondent to that of *judge*, are chosen for the particular purpose of dispensing it, according to the will of the sovereign or supreme ruling power in the state, it may be said to issue from the *political sanction*.

V. If at the hands of such *chance* persons in the community as the party in question may happen in the course of his life to have concerns with, according to each man's spontaneous

disposition, and not according to any settled or concerted rule, it may be said to issue from the *moral* or *popular sanction.*

VI. If from the immediate hand of a superior invisible being, either in the present life, or in a future, it may be said to issue from the *religious sanction.*

VII. Pleasures or pains which may be expected to issue from the *physical, political,* or *moral* sanctions, must all of them be expected to be experienced, if ever, in the *present* life: those which may be expected to issue from the *religious* sanction, may be expected to be experienced either in the *present* life or in a *future.*

VIII. Those which can be experienced in the present life, can of course be no others than such as human nature in the course of the present life is susceptible of: and from each of these sources may flow all the pleasures or pains of which, in the course of the present life, human nature is susceptible. With regard to these then, (with which alone we have in this place any concern) those of them which belong to any one of those sanctions, differ not ultimately in kind from those which belong to any one of the other three: the only difference there is among them lies in the circumstances that accompany their production.

IX. A man's goods, or his person, are consumed by fire. If this happened to him by what is called an accident, it was a calamity; if by reason of his own imprudence, (for instance, from his neglecting to put his candle out) it may be styled a punishment of the physical sanction; if it happened to him by the sentence of the political magistrate, a punishment belonging to the political sanction; that is, what is commonly called a punishment, if for want of any assistance which his *neighbour* withheld from him out of some dislike to his *moral* character, a punishment of the *moral* sanction; if by an immediate act of *God's* displeasure, manifested on account of some *sin* committed by him, or through any distraction of mind, occasioned by the dread of such displeasure, a punishment of the *religious* sanction.

X. As to such of the pleasures and pains belonging to the religious sanction, as regard a future life, of what kind these may be we cannot know. These lie not open to our observation.

During the present life they are matter only of expectation: and, whether that expectation be derived from natural or revealed religion, the particular kind of pleasure or pain, if it be different from all those which lie open to our observation, is what we can have no idea of. The best ideas we can obtain of such pains and pleasures are altogether unliquidated in point of quality. In what other respects our ideas of them *may* be liquidated will be considered in another place.

XI. Of these four sanctions the physical is altogether, we may observe, the ground-work of the political and the moral: so is it also of the religious, in as far as the latter bears relation to the present life. It is included in each of those other three. This may operate in any case, (that is, any of the pains or pleasures belonging to it may operate) independently of *them:* none of *them* can operate but by means of this. In a word, the powers of nature may operate of themselves; but neither the magistrate, nor men at large, *can* operate, nor is God in the case in question *supposed* to operate, but through the powers of nature.

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CHAPTER IV. VALUE OF A LOT OF PLEASURE OR PAIN, HOW TO BE MEASURED

I. Pleasures then, and the avoidance of pains, are the *ends* which the legislator has in view: it behoves him therefore to understand their *value.* Pleasures and pains are the *instruments* he has to work with: it behoves him therefore to understand their force, which is again, in other words, their value.

II. To a person considered *by himself,* the value of a pleasure or pain considered *by itself,* will be greater or less, according to the four following circumstances:

1. Its *intensity.*
2. Its *duration.*
3. Its *certainty* or *uncertainty.*
4. Its *propinquity* or *remoteness.*

III. These are the circumstances which are to be considered in estimating a pleasure or a pain considered each of them by itself. But when the value of any pleasure or pain is considered

for the purpose of estimating the tendency of any *act* by which it is produced, there are two other circumstances[1] to be taken into the account; these are,

5. Its *fecundity*, or the chance it has of being followed by sensations of the *same* kind: that is, pleasures, if it be a pleasure: pains, if it be a pain.

6. Its *purity*, or the chance it has of *not* being followed by sensations of the *opposite* kind: that is, pains, if it be a pleasure: pleasures, if it be a pain.

These two last, however, are in strictness scarcely to be deemed properties of the pleasures or the pain itself; they are not, therefore, in strictness to be taken into the account of the value of that pleasure or that pain. They are in strictness to be deemed properties only of the act, or other event, by which such pleasure or pain has been produced; and accordingly are only to be taken into the account of the tendency of such act or such event.

IV. To a *number* of persons, with reference to each of whom the value of a pleasure or a pain is considered, it will be greater or less, according to seven circumstances: to wit, the six preceding ones; *viz.*

1. Its *intensity*.
2. Its *duration*.
3. Its *certainty* or *uncertainty*.
4. Its *propinquity* or *remoteness*.
5. Its *fecundity*.
6. Its *purity*.

And one other; to wit:

7. Its *extent;* that is, the number of persons to whom it *extends;* or (in other words) who are affected by it.

V. To take an exact account then of the general tendency of any act, by which the interests of a community are affected,

[1] These circumstances have since been denominated *elements* or *dimensions* of *value* in a pleasure or a pain.

Not long after the publication of the first edition, the following memoriter verses were framed, in the view of lodging more effectually, in the memory, these points, on which the whole fabric of morals and legislation may be seen to rest:

Intense, long, certain, speedy, fruitful, pure —
Such marks in *pleasures* and in *pains* endure.
Such pleasures seek, if *private* be thy end:
If it be *public*, wide let them *extend*
Such *pains* avoid, whichever be thy view:
If pains *must* come, let them *extend* to few.

proceed as follows. Begin with any one person of those whose interests seem most immediately to be affected by it: and take an account,

1. Of the value of each distinguishable *pleasure* which appears to be produced by it in the *first* instance.

2. Of the value of each *pain* which appears to be produced by it in the *first* instance.

3. Of the value of each pleasure which appears to be produced by it *after* the first. This constitutes the *fecundity* of the first *pleasure* and the *impurity* of the first *pain*.

4. Of the value of each *pain* which appears to be produced by it after the first. This constitutes the *fecundity* of the first *pain*, and the *impurity* of the first pleasure.

5. Sum up all the values of all the *pleasures* on the one side, and those of all the pains on the other. The balance, if it be on the side of pleasure, will give the *good* tendency of the act upon the whole, with respect to the interests of that *individual* person; if on the side of pain, the *bad* tendency of it upon the whole.

6. Take an account of the *number* of persons whose interests appear to be concerned; and repeat the above process with respect to each. *Sum up* the numbers expressive of the degrees of *good* tendency, which the act has, with respect to each individual, in regard to whom the tendency of it is *good* upon the whole: do this again with respect to each individual, in regard to whom the tendency of it is *bad* upon the whole. Take the *balance;* which, if on the side of *pleasure*, will give the general *good tendency* of the act, with respect to the total number or community of individuals concerned; if on the side of pain, the general *evil tendency*, with respect to the same community.

VI. It is not to be expected that this process should be strictly pursued previously to every moral judgment, or to every legislative or judicial operation. It may, however, be always kept in view: and as near as the process actually pursued on these occasions approaches to it, so near will such process approach to the character of an exact one.

VII. The same process is alike applicable to pleasure and pain in whatever shape they appear: and by whatever denomination

they are distinguished: to pleasure, whether it be called *good* (which is properly the cause or instrument of pleasure), or *profit* (which is distant pleasure, or the cause or instrument of distant pleasure), or *convenience*, or *advantage*, *benefit*, *emolument*, *happiness*, and so forth: to pain, whether it be called *evil* (which corresponds to *good*), or *mischief*, or *inconvenience*, or *disadvantage*, or *loss*, or *unhappiness*, and so forth.

VIII. Nor is this a novel and unwarranted, any more than it is a useless theory. In all this there is nothing but what the practice of mankind, wheresoever they have a clear view of their own interest, is perfectly conformable to. An article of property, an estate in land, for instance, is valuable, on what account? On account of the pleasures of all kinds which it enables a man to produce, and what comes to the same thing, the pains of all kinds which it enables him to avert. But the value of such an article of property is universally understood to rise or fall according to the length or shortness of the time which a man has in it: the certainty or uncertainty of its coming into possession: and the nearness or remoteness of the time at which, if at all, it is to come into possession. As to the *intensity* of the pleasures which a man may derive from it, this is never thought of, because it depends upon the use which each particular person may come to make of it; which cannot be estimated till the particular pleasures he may come to derive from it, or the particular pains he may come to exclude by means of it, are brought to view. For the same reason, neither does he think of the *fecundity* or *purity* of those pleasures.

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CHAPTER X. MOTIVES

§ 2. No Motives either constantly Good, or constantly Bad

IX. In all this chain of motives, the principle or original link seems to be the last internal motive in prospect; it is to this that all the other motives in prospect owe their materiality; and the immediately acting motive its existence. This motive

in prospect, we see, is always some pleasure, or some pain; some pleasure, which the act in question is expected to be a means of continuing or producing: some pain which it is expected to be a means of discontinuing or preventing. A motive is substantially nothing more than pleasure or pain, operating in a certain manner.

x. Now, pleasure is in *itself* a good: nay, even setting aside immunity from pain, the only good: pain is in itself an evil; and, indeed, without exception, the only evil; or else the words good and evil have no meaning. And this is alike true of every sort of pain, and of every sort of pleasure. It follows, therefore, immediately and incontestably, that *there is no such thing as any sort of motive that is in itself a bad one.*

xi. It is common, however, to speak of actions as proceeding from *good* or *bad* motives: in which case the motives meant are such as are internal. The expression is far from being an accurate one; and as it is apt to occur in the consideration of almost every kind of offence, it will be requisite to settle the precise meaning of it, and observe how far it quadrates with the truth of things.

xii. With respect to goodness and badness, as it is with everything else that is not itself either pain or pleasure, so is it with motives. If they are good or bad, it is only on account of their effects: good, on account of their tendency to produce pleasure, or avert pain: bad, on account of their tendency to produce pain, or avert pleasure. Now the case is, that from one and the same motive, and from every kind of motive, may proceed actions that are good, others that are bad, and others that are indifferent. This we shall proceed to show with respect to all the different kinds of motives, as determined by the various kinds of pleasures and pains.

xiii. Such an analysis, useful as it is, will be found to be a matter of no small difficulty; owing, in great measure, to a certain perversity of structure which prevails more or less throughout all languages. To speak of motives, as of anything else, one must call them by their names. But the misfortune is that it is rare to meet with a motive of which the name expresses that and nothing more. Commonly along with the very name of the

motive, is tacitly involved a proposition imputing to it a certain quality; a quality which, in many cases, will appear to include that very goodness or badness, concerning which we are here inquiring whether, properly speaking, it be or be not imputable to motives. To use the common phrase, in most cases, the name of the motive is a word which is employed either only in a *good sense*, or else only in a *bad sense*. Now, when a word is spoken of as being used in a good sense, all that is necessarily meant is this: that in conjunction with the idea of the object it is put to signify, it conveys an idea of *approbation:* that is, of a pleasure or satisfaction, entertained by the person who employs the term at the thoughts of such object. In like manner, when a word is spoken of as being used in a bad sense, all that is necessarily meant is this: that, in conjunction with the idea of the object it is put to signify, it conveys an idea of *disapprobation:* that is, of a displeasure entertained by the person who employs the term at the thoughts of such object. Now, the circumstance on which such approbation is grounded, will, as naturally as any other, be the opinion of the *goodness* of the object in question, as above explained: such, at least, it must be, upon the principle of utility: so, on the other hand, the circumstance on which any such disapprobation is grounded, will, as naturally as any other, be the opinion of the *badness* of the object: such, at least, it must be, in as far as the principle of utility is taken for the standard.

Now there are certain motives which, unless in a few particular cases, have scarcely any other name to be expressed by but such a word as is used only in a good sense. This is the case, for example, with the motives of piety and honour. The consequence of this is, that if, in speaking of such a motive, a man should have occasion to apply the epithet bad to any actions which he mentions as apt to result from it, he must appear to be guilty of a contradiction in terms. But the names of motives which have scarcely any other name to be expressed by, but such a word as is used only in a bad sense, are many more. This is the case, for example, with the motives of lust and avarice. And, accordingly, if in speaking of any such motive, a man should have occasion to apply the epithets good or indifferent to any actions which he

mentions as apt to result from it, he must here also appear to be guilty of a similar contradiction.

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§ 3. Catalogue of Motives corresponding to that of Pleasures and Pains

xxv. To the pleasures of sympathy corresponds the motive which, in a neutral sense, is termed good-will. The word sympathy may also be used on this occasion: though the sense of it seems to be rather more extensive. In a good sense it is styled benevolence: and in certain cases, philanthropy; and, in a figurative way, brotherly love; in others, humanity; in others, charity; in others, pity and compassion; in others, mercy; in others, gratitude; in others, tenderness; in others, patriotism; in others, public spirit. Love is also employed in this as in so many other senses. In a bad sense, it has no name applicable to it in all cases: in particular cases it is styled partiality. The word zeal, with certain epithets prefixed to it, might also be employed sometimes on this occasion, though the sense of it be more extensive; applying sometimes to ill as well as to good will. It is thus we speak of party zeal, national zeal, and public zeal. The word attachment is also used with the like epithets: we also say family-attachment. The French expression, *esprit de corps*, for which as yet there seems to be scarcely any name in English, might be rendered, in some cases, though rather inadequately, by the terms corporation spirit, corporation attachment, or corporation zeal.

1. A man who has set a town on fire is apprehended and committed: out of regard or compassion for him, you help him to break prison. In this case the generality of people will probably scarcely know whether to condemn your motive or to applaud it; those who condemn your conduct, will be disposed rather to impute it to some other motive; if they style it benevolence or compassion, they will be for prefixing an epithet, and calling it false benevolence or false compassion. 2. The man is taken again, and is put upon his trial: to save him you swear falsely in his favour. People, who would not call your motive a bad one before, will perhaps call it so now. 3. A man is at law with you

about an estate: he has no right to it: the judge knows this, yet, having an esteem or affection for your adversary, adjudges it to him. In this case the motive is by everybody deemed abominable, and is termed injustice and partiality. 4. You detect a statesman in receiving bribes; out of regard to the public interest, you give information of it, and prosecute him. In this case, by all who acknowledge your conduct to have originated from this motive, your motive will be deemed a laudable one, and styled public spirit. But his friends and adherents will not choose to account for your conduct in any such manner: they will rather attribute it to party enmity. 5. You find a man on the point of starving: you relieve him; and save his life. In this case your motive will by everybody be accounted laudable, and it will be termed compassion, pity, charity, benevolence. Yet in all these cases the motive is the same: it is neither more nor less than the motive of good-will.

XXVI. To the pleasures of malevolence, or antipathy, corresponds the motive which, in a neutral sense, is termed antipathy or displeasure, and, in particular cases, dislike, aversion, abhorrence, and indignation; in a neutral sense, or perhaps a sense leaning a little to the bad side, ill-will, and, in particular cases, anger, wrath, and enmity. In a bad sense it is styled, in different cases, wrath, spleen, ill-humour, hatred, malice, rancour, rage, fury, cruelty, tyranny, envy, jealousy, revenge, misanthropy, and by other names, which it is hardly worth while to endeavour to collect. Like good-will, it is used with epithets expressive of the persons who are the objects of the affection. Hence we hear of party enmity, party rage, and so forth. In a good sense there seems to be no single name for it. In compound expressions it may be spoken of in such a sense, by epithets, such as *just* and *laudable*, prefixed to words that are used in a neutral or nearly neutral sense.

1. You rob a man: he prosecutes you, and gets you punished: out of resentment you set upon him, and hang him with your own hands. In this case your motive will universally be deemed detestable, and will be called malice, cruelty, revenge, and so forth. 2. A man has stolen a little money from you: out of resentment you prosecute him, and get him hanged by course of law.

In this case people will probably be a little divided in their opinions about your motive: your friends will deem it a laudable one, and call it a just or laudable resentment: your enemies will perhaps be disposed to deem it blameable, and call it cruelty, malice, revenge, and so forth: to obviate which, your friends will try perhaps to change the motive, and call it public spirit. 3. A man has murdered your father: out of resentment you prosecute him, and get him put to death in course of law. In this case your motive will be universally deemed a laudable one, and styled, as before, a just or laudable resentment: and your friends, in order to bring forward the more amiable principle from which the malevolent one, which was your immediate motive, took its rise, will be for keeping the latter out of sight, speaking of the former only, under some such name as filial piety. Yet in all these cases the motive is the same: it is neither more nor less than the motive of ill-will.

XXIX. It appears then that there is no such thing as any sort of motive which is a bad one in itself: nor, consequently, any such thing as a sort of motive which in itself is exclusively a good one. And as to their effects, it appears too that these are sometimes bad, at other times either indifferent or good, and this appears to be the case with every sort of motive. *If any sort of motive then is either good or bad on the score of its effects, this is the case only on individual occasions, and with individual motives;* and this is the case with one sort of motive as well as with another. *If any sort of motive then can, in consideration of its effects, be termed with any propriety a bad one*, it can only be with reference to the balance of all the effects it may have had of both kinds within a given period, that is, of its most usual tendency.

XXX. What then? (it will be said) are not lust, cruelty, avarice, bad motives? Is there so much as any one individual occasion, in which motives like these can be otherwise than bad? No, certainly: and yet the proposition, that there is no one *sort* of motive but what will on many occasions be a good one, is nevertheless true. The fact is, that these are names which, if properly applied, are never applied but in the cases where the motives they signify happen to be bad. The names of these motives, considered apart from their effects, are sexual desire,

displeasure, and pecuniary interest. To sexual desire, when the effects of it are looked upon as bad, is given the name of lust. Now lust is always a bad motive. Why? Because if the case be such, that the effects of the motive are not bad, it does not go, or at least ought not to go, by the name of lust. The case is, then, that when I say, "Lust is a bad motive," it is a proposition that merely concerns the import of the word lust; and which would be false if transferred to the other word used for the same motive, sexual desire. Hence we see the emptiness of all those rhapsodies of common-place morality, which consist in the taking of such names as lust, cruelty, and avarice, and branding them with marks of reprobation: applied to the *thing*, they are false; applied to the *name*, they are true indeed, but nugatory. Would you do a real service to mankind, show them the cases in which sexual desire *merits* the name of lust; displeasure, that of cruelty, and pecuniary interest, that of avarice.

XXXI. If it were necessary to apply such denominations as good, bad, and indifferent to motives, they might be classed in the following manner, in consideration of the most frequent complexion of their effects. In the class of good motives might be placed the articles of, 1. Good-will. 2. Love of reputation. 3. Desire of amity. And, 4. Religion. In the class of bad motives, 5. Displeasure. In the class of neutral or indifferent motives, 6. Physical desire. 7. Pecuniary interest. 8. Love of power. 9. Self-preservation; as including the fear of the pains of the senses, the love of ease, and the love of life.

XXXII. This method of arrangement, however, cannot but be imperfect; and the nomenclature belonging to it is in danger of being fallacious. For by what method of investigation can a man be assured, that with regard to the motives ranked under the name of good, the good effects they have had, from the beginning of the world, have, in each of the four species comprised under this name, been superior to the bad? still more difficulty would a man find in assuring himself, that with regard to those which are ranked under the name of neutral or indifferent, the effects they have had have exactly balanced each other, the value of the good being neither greater nor less than that of

the bad. It is to be considered, that the interests of the person himself can no more be left out of the estimate, than those of the rest of the community. For what would become of the species, if it were not for the motives of hunger and thirst, sexual desire, the fear of pain, and the love of life? Nor in the actual constitution of human nature is the motive of displeasure less necessary, perhaps, than any of the others: although a system, in which the business of life might be carried on without it, might possibly be conceived. It seems, therefore, that they could scarcely, without great danger of mistakes, be distinguished in this manner even with reference to each other.

XXXIII. The only way, it should seem, in which a motive can with safety and propriety be styled good or bad, is with reference to its effects in each individual instance; and principally from the intention it gives birth to: from which arise, as will be shown hereafter, the most material part of its effects. A motive is good, when the intention it gives birth to is a good one; bad, when the intention is a bad one: and an intention is good or bad, according to the material consequences that are the objects of it. So far is it from the goodness of the intention's being to be known only from the species of the motive. But from one and the same motive, as we have seen, may result intentions of every sort of complexion whatsoever. This circumstance, therefore, can afford no clue for the arrangement of the several sorts of motives.

XXXIV. A more commodious method, therefore, it should seem, would be to distribute them according to the influence which they appear to have on the interests of the other members of the community, laying those of the party himself out of the question: to wit, according to the tendency which they appear to have to unite, or disunite, his interests and theirs. On this plan they may be distinguished into *social*, *dissocial*, and *self-regarding*. In the social class may be reckoned, 1. Good-will. 2. Love of reputation. 3. Desire of amity. 4. Religion. In the dissocial may be placed, 5. Displeasure. In the self-regarding class, 6. Physical desire. 7. Pecuniary interest. 8. Love of power. 9. Self-preservation; as including the fear of the pains of the senses, the love of ease, and the love of life.

XXXV. With respect to the motives that have been termed social, if any farther distinction should be of use, to that of good-will alone may be applied the epithet of *purely-social;* while the love of reputation, the desire of amity, and the motive of religion, may together be comprised under the division of *semi-social:* the social tendency being much more constant and unequivocal in the former than in any of the three latter. Indeed these last, social as they may be termed, are self-regarding at the same time.

§ 4. Order of Pre-eminence among Motives

XXXVI. Of all these sorts of motives, good-will is that of which the dictates, taken in a general view, are surest of coinciding with those of the principle of utility. For the dictates of utility are neither more nor less than the dictates of the most extensive and enlightened (that is *well-advised*) benevolence. The dictates of the other motives may be conformable to those of utility, or repugnant, as it may happen.

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XXXVIII. After good-will, the motive of which the dictates seem to have the next best chance for coinciding with those of utility, is that of the love of reputation. There is but one circumstance which prevents the dictates of this motive from coinciding in all cases with those of the former. This is, that men in their likings and dislikings, in the dispositions they manifest to annex to any mode of conduct their approbation or their disapprobation, and in consequence to the person who appears to practise it, their good or their ill will, do not govern themselves exclusively by the principle of utility. . . . Sometimes it is the principle of asceticism they are guided by: sometimes the principle of sympathy and antipathy.

CHAPTER XI. OF HUMAN DISPOSITIONS IN GENERAL

I. In the foregoing chapter it has been shown at large, that goodness or badness cannot, with any propriety, be predicated of motives. Is there nothing then about a man that can properly

be termed good or bad, when, on such or such an occasion, he suffers himself to be governed by such or such a motive? Yes, certainly: his *disposition*. Now disposition is a kind of fictitious entity, feigned for the convenience of discourse, in order to express what there is supposed to be *permanent* in a man's frame of mind, where, on such or such an occasion, he has been influenced by such or such a motive, to engage in an act, which, as it appeared to him, was of such or such a tendency.

II. It is with disposition as with everything else: it will be good or bad according to its effects: according to the effects it has in augmenting or diminishing the happiness of the community. A man's disposition may accordingly be considered in two points of view: according to the influence it has, either, 1. on his own happiness: or, 2. on the happiness of others. Viewed in both these lights together, or in either of them indiscriminately, it may be termed, on the one hand, good; on the other, bad; or, in flagrant cases, depraved. Viewed in the former of these lights, it has scarcely any peculiar name, which has as yet been appropriated to it. It might be termed, though but inexpressively, frail or infirm, on the one hand: sound or firm, on the other. Viewed in the other light, it might be termed beneficent or meritorious, on the one hand: pernicious or mischievous, on the other. Now of that branch of a man's disposition, the effects of which regard in the first instance only himself, there needs not much to be said here. To reform it when bad, is the business rather of the moralist than the legislator: nor is it susceptible of those various modifications which make so material a difference in the effects of the other. Again, with respect to that part of it, the effects whereof regard others in the first instance, it is only in as far as it is of a mischievous nature that the penal branch of law has any immediate concern with it: in as far as it may be of a beneficent nature, it belongs to a hitherto but little cultivated, and as yet unnamed branch of law, which might be styled the remuneratory.

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RICHARD PRICE

(1723-1791)

A REVIEW OF THE PRINCIPAL QUESTIONS IN MORALS*

CHAPTER I. OF THE ORIGIN OF OUR IDEAS OF MORAL RIGHT AND WRONG

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'T is a very necessary previous observation, that our ideas of right and wrong are simple ideas, and must therefore be ascribed to some power of immediate perception in the human mind. He that doubts this, need only try to give definitions of them, which shall amount to more than synonymous expressions. Most of the confusion in which the question concerning the foundation of morals has been involved has proceeded from inattention to this remark. There are, undoubtedly, some actions that are ultimately approved, and for justifying which no reason can be assigned; as there are some ends, which are ultimately desired, and for chusing which no reason can be given. Were not this true, there would be an infinite progression of reasons and ends, and therefore nothing could be at all approved or desired.

Supposing then, that we have a power immediately perceiving right and wrong: the point I am now to endeavour to prove, is, that this power is the Understanding, agreeably to the assertion at the end of the first section. I cannot but flatter myself, that the main obstacle to the acknowledgment of this, has been already removed, by the observations made in the preceding section, to shew that the understanding is a power of immediate perception, which gives rise to new original ideas; nor do I think it possible that there should have been many disputes on this subject had this been properly considered.

But, in order more explicitly and distinctly to evince what I have asserted (in the only way the nature of the question seems capable of) let me,

* 1st ed., London, 1758. Reprinted from the 3d ed., *ib.* 1787.

First, Observe, that it implies no absurdity, but evidently may be true. It is undeniable, that many of our ideas are derived from our intuition of truth, or the discernment of the natures of things by the understanding. This therefore may be the source of our moral ideas. It is at least possible, that right and wrong may denote what we understand and know concerning certain objects, in like manner with proportion and disproportion, connexion and repugnancy, contingency and necessity, and the other ideas before-mentioned. — I will add, that nothing has been offered which has any tendency to prove the contrary. All that can appear, from the objections and reasonings of the Author of the Enquiry into the original of our ideas of beauty and virtue, is only, what has been already observed, and what does not in the least affect the point in debate: namely, that the words right and wrong, fit and unfit, express simple and undeniable ideas. But that the power perceiving them is properly a sense and not reason; that these ideas denote nothing true of actions, nothing in the nature of actions; this, he has left entirely without proof. He appears, indeed, to have taken for granted, that if virtue and vice are immediately perceived, they must be perceptions of an implanted sense. But no conclusion could have been more hasty. For will any one take upon him to say, that all powers of immediate perception must be arbitrary and implanted; or that there can be no simple ideas denoting any thing besides the qualities and passions of the mind? — In short. Whatever some writers have said to the contrary, it is certainly a point not yet decided, that virtue is wholly factitious, and to be felt, not understood.

As there are some propositions, which, when attended to, necessarily determine all minds to believe them: And as (which will be shown hereafter) there are some ends, whose natures are such, that, when perceived, all beings immediately and necessarily desire them: So is it very credible, that, in like manner, there are some actions whose natures are such, that, when observed, all rational beings immediately and necessarily approve them.

I do not at all care what follows from Mr. Hume's assertion, that all our ideas are either impressions, or copies of impressions; or from Mr. Locke's assertion that they are all deducible

from sensation and reflexion. — The first of these assertions is, I think, destitute of all proof; supposes, when applied in this as well as many other cases, the point in question; and, when pursued to its consequences, ends in the destruction of all truth and the subversion of our intellectual faculties. — The other wants much explication to render it consistent with any tolerable account of the original of our moral ideas: nor does there seem to be any thing necessary to convince a person, that all our ideas are not deducible from sensation and reflexion, except taken in a very large and comprehensive sense, besides considering how Mr. Locke derives from them our moral ideas. He places them among our ideas of relations, and represents rectitude as signifying the conformity of actions to some rules or laws; which rules or laws, he says, are either the will of God, the decrees of the magistrate, or the fashion of the country: from whence it follows, that it is an absurdity to apply rectitude to rules and laws themselves; to suppose the divine will to be directed by it; or to consider it as itself a rule and law. But, it is undoubted, that this great man would have detested these consequences; and, indeed, it is sufficiently evident, that he was strangely embarrassed in his notions on this, as well as some other subjects. But,

Secondly, I know of no better way of determining this point, than by referring those who doubt about it to common sense, and putting them upon considering the nature of their own perceptions. — Could we suppose a person, who, when he perceived an external object, was at a loss to determine whether he perceived it by means of his organs of sight or touch; what better method could be taken to satisfy him? There is no possibility of doubting in any such cases. And it seems not more difficult to determine in the present case.

Were the question; what that perception is which we have of number, diversity, causation or proportion; and whether our ideas of them signify truth and reality perceived by the understanding, or impressions made by the objects to which we ascribe them, on our minds; were, I say, this the question; would it not be sufficient to appeal to every man's consciousness? — These perceptions seem to me to have no greater pretence to be de-

nominated perceptions of the understanding, than right and wrong.

It is true, some impressions of pleasure or pain, satisfaction or disgust, generally attend our perceptions of virtue and vice. But these are merely their effects and concomitants, and not the perceptions themselves, which ought no more to be confounded with them, than a particular truth (like that for which Pythagoras offered a hecatomb) ought to be confounded with the pleasure that may attend the discovery of it. Some emotion or other accompanies, perhaps, all our perceptions; but more remarkably our perceptions of right and wrong. And this, as will be again observed in the next chapter, is what has led to the mistake of making them to signify nothing but impressions, which error some have extended to all objects of knowledge; and thus have been led into an extravagant and monstrous scepticism.

But to return; let any one compare the ideas arising from our powers of sensation, with those arising from our intuition of the natures of things, and enquire which of them his ideas of right and wrong most resemble. On the issue of such a comparison may we safely rest this question. It is scarcely conceivable that any one can impartially attend to the nature of his own perceptions, and determine that, when he thinks gratitude or beneficence to be right, he perceives nothing true of them, and understands nothing, but only receives an impression from a sense. Was it possible for a person to question, whether his idea of equality was gained from sense or intelligence; he might soon be convinced, by considering, whether he is not sure, that certain lines or figures are really equal, and that their equality must be perceived by all minds, as soon as the objects themselves are perceived. — In the same manner may we satisfy ourselves concerning the origin of the idea of right: For have we not a like consciousness, that we discern the one, as well as the other, in certain objects? Upon what possible grounds can we pronounce the one to be sense, and the other reason? Would not a Being purely intelligent, having happiness within his reach, approve of securing it for himself? Would not he think this right; and would it not be right? When we contemplate the happiness of

a species, or of a world, and pronounce concerning the action of reasonable beings which promote it, that they are right; is this judging erroneously? Or is it no determination of judgment at all, but a species of mental taste? — Are not such actions really right? Or is every apprehension of rectitude in them false and delusive, just as the like apprehension is concerning the effects of external and internal sensation, when taken to belong to the causes producing them?

It seems beyond contradiction certain, that every being must desire happiness for himself; and can those natures of things, from which the desire of happiness and aversion to misery necessarily arise, leave, at the same time, a rational nature totally indifferent as to any approbation of actions procuring the one, or preventing the other? Is there nothing that any understanding can perceive to be amiss in a creature's bringing upon himself, or others, calamities and ruin? Is there nothing truly wrong in the absolute and eternal misery of an innocent being? — "It appears wrong to us." — And what reason can you have for doubting, whether it appears what it is? — Should a being, after being flattered with hopes of bliss, and having his expectations raised by encouragements and promises, find himself, without reason, plunged into irretrievable torments; would he not justly complain? Would he want a sense to cause the idea of wrong to arise in his mind? — Can goodness, gratitude, and veracity, appear to any mind under the same characters, with cruelty, ingratitude, and treachery? — Darkness may as soon appear to be light.

It would, I doubt, be to little purpose to plead further here, the natural and universal apprehensions of mankind, that our ideas of right and wrong belong to the understanding, and denote real characters of actions; because it will be easy to reply, that they have a like opinion of the sensible qualities of bodies; and that nothing is more common than for men to mistake their own sensations for the properties of the objects producing them, or to apply to the object itself, what they find always accompanying it, whenever observed. Let it therefore be observed,

Thirdly, That if right and wrong denote effects of sensation,

it must imply the greatest absurdity to suppose them applicable to actions: that is; the ideas of right and wrong and of action, must in this case be incompatible; as much so, as the idea of pleasure and a regular form, or of pain and the collisions of bodies. — All sensations, as such, are modes of consciousness, or feelings of a sentient being, which must be of a nature totally different from the particular causes which produce them. A coloured body, if we speak accurately, is the same absurdity with a square sound. We need no experiments to prove that heat, cold, colours, tastes, &c. are not real qualities of bodies; because the ideas of matter and of these qualities are incompatible. — But is there indeed any such incompatibility between actions and right? Or any such absurdity in affirming the one of the other? — Are the ideas of them as different as the idea of a sensation, and its cause?

On the contrary; the more we enquire, the more indisputable, I imagine, it will appear to us, that we express necessary truth, when we say of some actions, they are right; and of others, they are wrong. Some of the most careful enquirers think thus, and find it out of their power not to be persuaded that these are real distinctions belonging to the natures of actions. Can it be so difficult, to distinguish between the ideas of sensibility and reason; between the intuitions of truth and the passions of the mind? Is that a scheme of morals we can be very fond of, which makes our perceptions of moral good and evil in actions and manners, to be all vision and fancy? Who can help seeing, that right and wrong are as absolutely unintelligible, and void of sense and meaning, when supposed to signify nothing true of actions, no essential, inherent difference between them, as the perceptions of the external and internal senses are, when thought to be properties of the objects that produce them?

How strange would it be to maintain, that there is no possibility of mistaking with respect to right and wrong; that the apprehensions of all beings, on this subject, are alike just, since all sensation must be alike true sensation? — Is there a greater absurdity, than to suppose, that the moral rectitude of an action is nothing absolute and unvarying; but capable, like all the modi-

fications of pleasure and pain, of being intended and remitted, of increasing and lessening, of rising and sinking with the force and liveliness of our feelings? Would it be less ridiculous to suppose this of the relations between given quantities, of the equality of numbers, or the figure of bodies?

In the last place; let it be considered, that all actions, undoubtedly, have a nature. That is, some character certainly belongs to them, and somewhat there is to be truly affirmed of them. This may be, that some of them are right, others wrong. But if this is not allowed; if no actions are, in themselves, either right or wrong, or any thing of a moral and obligatory nature, which can be an object to the understanding; it follows, that, in themselves, they are all indifferent. This is what is essentially true of them, and this is what all understandings, that perceive right, must perceive them to be. But are we not conscious, that we perceive the contrary? And have we not as much reason to believe the contrary, as to believe or trust at all our own discernment?

In other words; every thing having a nature or essence, from whence such and such truths concerning it necessarily result, and which it is the proper province of the understanding to perceive; it follows, that nothing whatever can be exempted from its inspection and sentence, and that of every thought, sentiment, and subject, it is the natural and ultimate judge. Actions, therefore, ends and events are within its province. Of these, as well as all other objects, it belongs to it to judge. — What is this judgment? — One would think it impossible for any person, without some hesitation and reluctance, to reply; that the judgment he forms of them is this; that they are all essentially indifferent, and that there is no one thing fitter to be done than another. If this is judging truly; how obvious to infer, that it signifies not what we do; and that the determination to think otherwise, is an imposition upon rational creatures. Why then should they not labour to suppress in themselves this determination, and to extirpate from their natures all the delusive ideas of morality, worth, and virtue? What though the ruin of the world should follow? — There would be nothing really wrong in this.

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In short; it seems sufficient to overthrow any scheme, that such consequences, as the following, should arise from it: — That no one being can judge one end to be better than another, or believe a real moral difference between actions; without giving his assent to an impossibility; without mistaking the affections of his own mind for truth, and sensation for knowledge. — That there being nothing intrinsically proper or improper, just or unjust; there is nothing obligatory; [1] but all beings enjoy, from the reasons of things and the nature of actions, liberty to act as they will.

The following important corollary arises from these arguments:

That morality is eternal and immutable.

Right and wrong, it appears, denote what actions are. Now whatever any thing is, that it is, not by will, or decree, or power, but by nature and necessity. Whatever a triangle or circle is, that it is unchangeably and eternally. It depends upon no will or power, whether the three angles of a triangle and two right ones shall be equal; whether the periphery of a circle and its diameter shall be incommensurable; or whether matter shall be divisible, moveable, passive, and inert. Every object of the understanding has an indivisible and invariable essence; from whence arise its properties, and numberless truths concerning it. Omnipotence does not consist in a power to alter the nature of things, and to destroy necessary truth (for this is contradictory, and would infer the destruction of all wisdom, and knowledge), but in an absolute command over all particular, external existences, to create or destroy them, or produce any possible changes among them. — The natures of things then being immutable; whatever we suppose the natures of actions to be, they must be immutably. If they are indifferent, this indifference is itself immutable, and there neither is nor can be any one thing that, in reality, we ought to do rather than another. The same is to

[1] Moral right and wrong, and moral obligation or duty, must remain, or vanish together. They necessarily accompany one another, and make but as it were one idea. As far as the former are fictitious and imaginary, the latter must be so too.

be said of right and wrong, of moral good and evil, as far as they express real characters of actions. They must immutably and necessarily belong to those actions of which they are truly affirmed.

No will, therefore, can render any thing good and obligatory, which was not so antecedently, and from eternity; or any action right, that is not so in itself; meaning by action, not the bare external effect produced, but the ultimate principle of conduct, or the determination of a reasonable being, considered as arising from the perception of some motives and reasons and intended for some end. According to this sense of the word action, whenever the principle from which we act is different, the action is different, though the external effects produced may be the same. If we attend to this, the meaning and truth of what I have just observed will be easily seen. — Put the case of any action, the performance of which is indifferent, or attended with no circumstances of the agent that render it better or fitter to be done than omitted. Is it not plain that, while all things continue the same, it is as impossible for any will or power to make acting obligatory here, as it is for them to make two equal things unequal without producing any change in either? It is true, the doing of any indifferent thing may become obligatory, in consequence of a command from a being possessed of rightful authority over us: but it is obvious, that in this case, the command produces a change in the circumstances of the agent, and that what, in consequence of it, becomes obligatory, is not the same with what before was indifferent. The external effect, that is, the matter of the action is indeed the same; but nothing is plainer, than that actions in this sense the same, may in a moral view be totally different according to the ends aimed at by them, and the principles of morality under which they fall.

When an action, otherwise indifferent, becomes obligatory, by being made the subject of a promise; we are not to imagine, that our own will or breath alters the nature of things by making what is indifferent not so. But what was indifferent before the promise is still so; and it cannot be supposed, that, after the promise, it becomes obligatory, without a contradiction. All that the pro-

mise does, is, to alter the connexion of a particular effect; or to cause that to be an instance of right conduct which was not so before. There are no effects producible by us, which may not, in this manner, fall under different principles of morality; acquire connexions sometimes with happiness, and sometimes with misery; and thus stand in different relations to the eternal rules of duty.

The objection, therefore, to what is here asserted, taken from the effects of positive laws and promises, has no weight. It appears, that when an obligation to particular indifferent actions arises from the command of the Deity, or positive laws; it is by no means to be inferred from hence, that obligation is the creature of will, or that the nature of what is indifferent is changed: nothing then becoming obligatory, which was not so from eternity; that is, obeying the divine will, and just authority. And had there been nothing right in this, had there been no reason from the natures of things for obeying God's will; it is certain, it could have induced no obligation, nor at all influenced an intellectual nature as such. — Will and laws signify nothing, abstracted from something previous to them, in the character of the law-giver and the relations of beings to one another, to give them force and render disobedience a crime. If mere will ever obliged, what reason can be given, why the will of one being should oblige, and of another not; why it should not oblige alike to every thing it requires; and why there should be any difference between power and authority? It is truth and reason, then, that, in all cases, oblige, and not mere will. So far, we see, is it from being possible, that any will or laws should create right; that they can have no effect, but in virtue of natural and antecedent right.

Thus, then, is morality fixed on an immoveable basis, and appears not to be, in any sense, factitious; or the arbitrary production of any power human or divine; but equally everlasting and necessary with all truth and reason. And this we find to be as evident, as that right and wrong signify a reality in what is so denominated.

CHAPTER II. OF OUR IDEAS OF THE BEAUTY AND DEFORMITY OF ACTIONS

Having considered our ideas of right and wrong; I come now to consider our ideas of beauty, and its contrary.

This is the second kind of sentiment, or perception, with respect to actions, which I noticed at the beginning of the preceding chapter. Little need be said to show, that it is different from the former. We are plainly conscious of more than the bare discernment of right and wrong, or the cool judgement of reason concerning the natures of actions. We often say of some actions, not only that they are right, but that they are amiable; and of others, not only that they are wrong, but odious and shocking. Every one must see, that these epithets denote the delight; or on the contrary, the horror and detestation felt by ourselves; and, consequently, signify not any real qualities or characters of actions, but the effects in us, or the particular pleasure and pain, attending the consideration of them.

What then is the true account of these perceptions? must they not arise entirely from an arbitrary structure of our minds, by which certain objects, when observed, are rendered the occasions of certain sensations and affections? And therefore, in this instance, are we not under a necessity of recurring to a sense? Can there be any connexion, except such as arises from implanted principles, between any perceptions and particular modifications of pleasure and pain in the perceiving mind?

I answer: That there may be such a connexion; and that I think, there is such a connexion in many instances; and particularly in this instance.

Why or how the impressions made by external objects on our bodily organs, produce the sensations constantly attending them, it is not possible for us to discover. The same is true of the sensations and affections of mind produced by the objects of many of the internal senses. In such instances, we can conceive of no connexion between the effects in us and their apparent causes; and the only account we can give is, that "such is our frame; so God

has seen fit to adapt our faculties and particular objects to one another." But this is far from being true universally. There are objects which have a natural aptitude to please or displease our minds. And thus in the spiritual world, the case is the same, as in the corporeal; where, though there are events which we cannot explain, and numberless causes and effects of which, for want of being acquainted with the inward structure and constitution of bodies, we know no more than their existence: there are also causes the manner of whose operation we understand; and events, between which we discern a necessary connexion.

One account, therefore, of the sentiments we are examining, is: That such are the natures of certain actions, that, when perceived, there must result certain emotions and affections.

That there are objects which have a natural aptitude to please or offend, and between which and the contemplating mind there is a necessary congruity or incongruity, seems to me unquestionable. — For, what shall we say of supreme and complete excellence? Is what we mean by this only a particular kind of sensation; or, if something real and objective, can it be contemplated without emotion? Must there be the aid of a sense to make the character of the Deity appear amiable; or, would pure and abstract reason be indifferent to it? Is there any thing more necessary to cause it to be loved and admired besides knowing it? The more it is known, and the better it is understood, must it not the more delight?

Again, a reasonable being, void of all superadded determinations or senses, who knows what order and happiness are, would, I think, unavoidably, receive pleasure from the survey of an universe where perfect order prevailed; and the contrary prospect of universal confusion and misery would offend him.

What is thus true, in these and other instances, is particularly evident in the present case. It is not indeed plainer, that, in any instances, there are correspondencies and connexions of things among themselves; or that one motion has a tendency to produce another; than it is, that virtue is naturally adapted to please every observing mind; and vice the contrary.

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To return therefore from this digression. The observations now made will not account for all our feelings and affections with respect to virtue and vice. Our intellectual faculties are in their infancy. The lowest degrees of reason are sufficient to discover moral distinctions in general; because these are self-evident, and included in the ideas of certain actions and characters. They must, therefore, appear to all who are capable of making actions the objects of their reflexion. But the extent to which they appear, and the accuracy and force with which they are discerned; and, consequently, their influence, must, so far as they are the objects of pure intelligence, be in proportion to the strength and improvement of the rational faculties of beings and their acquaintance with truth and the natures of things.

From hence, it must appear, that in men it is necessary that the rational principle, or the intellectual discernment of right and wrong, should be aided by instinctive determinations. — The dictates of mere reason, being slow, and deliberate, would be otherwise much too weak. The condition in which we are placed, renders many urgent passions necessary for us; and these cannot but often interfere with our sentiments of rectitude. Reason alone (imperfect as it is in us) is by no means sufficient to defend us against the danger to which, in such circumstances, we are exposed. Our Maker has, therefore, wisely provided remedies for its imperfections; and established a due balance in our frame by annexing to our intellectual perceptions sensations and instincts, which give them greater weight and force.

In short The truth seems to be that, "in contemplating the actions of moral agents, we have both a perception of the understanding, and a feeling of the heart; and that the latter, or the effects in us accompanying our moral perceptions, depend on two causes. Partly, on the positive constitution of our natures: but principally on the essential congruity or incongruity between moral ideas and our intellectual faculties."

It may be difficult to determine the precise limits between these two sources of our mental feelings; and to say, how far the effects of the one are blended with those of the other. It is undoubted, that we should have felt and acted otherwise than we

now do, if the decisions of reason had been left entirely without support; nor is it easy to imagine how pernicious to us this would have proved. On this account it cannot be doubted, but that both the causes I have mentioned unite their influence: and the great question in morality is, not whether we owe much to implanted senses and determinations; but whether we owe all to them.

It was, probably, in consequence of not duly considering the difference I have now insisted on between the honestum and pulchrum (the δίκαιον and καλόν); or of not carefully distinguishing between the discernment of the mind and the sensations attending it in our moral perceptions; that the Author of the Enquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue, was led to derive all our ideas of virtue from an implanted sense. Moral good and evil, he everywhere describes, by the effects accompanying the perception of them. The rectitude of an action is, with him, the same with its gratefulness to the observer; and wrong, the contrary. But what can be more evident, than that right and pleasure, wrong and pain, are as different as a cause and its effect; what is understood, and what is felt; absolute truth, and its agreeableness to the mind. — Let it be granted, as undoubtedly it must, that some degree of pleasure is inseparable from the observation of virtuous actions: [1] It is just as unreasonable to infer from hence, that the discernment of virtue is nothing distinct from the reception of this pleasure; as it would be to infer, as some have done, that solidity, extension, and figure are only particular modes of sensation; because attended, whenever they are perceived, with some sensations of sight or touch, and impossible to be conceived by the imagination without them.

An able writer on these subjects, tells us that, after some [2] doubts, he at last satisfied himself, that all beauty, whether natural or moral, is a species of absolute truth; as resulting from, or consisting in, the necessary relations and congruities of ideas. It is not easy to say what this means. Natural beauty will be con-

[1] The virtue of an action, Mr. Hume says, is its pleasing us after a particular manner. *Treatise of Human Nature*, vol. iii.

[2] See Mr. Balguy's *Tracts on the Foundation of Moral Goodness*.

sidered presently. And as to moral beauty, one would think, that the meaning must be, that it denotes a real quality of certain actions. But the word beauty seems always to refer to the reception of pleasure; and the beauty, therefore, of an action or character, must signify its being such as pleases us, or has an aptness to please when perceived: nor can it be just to conceive more in the action itself, or to affirm more of it, than this aptness, or that objective goodness or rectitude on which it depends. Beauty and loveliness are synonymous; but an object self-lovely can only mean an object, by its nature, fitted to engage love.

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THOMAS REID

(1710–1796)

ESSAYS ON THE ACTIVE POWERS OF MAN*

ESSAY III. CHAPTER VI. OF THE SENSE OF DUTY

We are next to consider, how we learn to judge and determine, that this is right, and that is wrong.

The abstract notion of moral good and ill would be of no use to direct our life, if we had not the power of applying it to particular actions, and determining what is morally good, and what is morally ill.

Some philosophers, with whom I agree, ascribe this to an original power or faculty in man, which they call the *Moral Sense*, the *Moral Faculty*, *Conscience*. Others think that our moral sentiments may be accounted for without supposing any original sense or faculty appropriated to that purpose, and go into very different systems to account for them.

I am not, at present, to take any notice of those systems, because the opinion first mentioned seems to me to be the truth; to wit, That, by an original power of the mind, when we come to years of understanding and reflection, we not only have the notions of right and wrong in conduct, but perceive certain things to be right, and others to be wrong.

The name of the *Moral Sense*, though more frequently given to Conscience since Lord Shaftesbury and Dr. Hutcheson wrote, is not new. The *sensus recti et honesti*, is a phrase not unfrequent among the ancients; neither is the *sense of duty*, among us.

It has got this name of *sense*, no doubt, from some analogy which it is conceived to bear to the external senses. And, if we have just notions of the office of the external senses, the analogy

* Edinburgh, 1788. Reprinted from *The Works of Thomas Reid*, edited by Sir William Hamilton, Edinburgh, 1842; *ib.* 1852.

is very evident, and I see no reason to take offence, as some have done, at the name of the *moral sense*.

The offence taken at this name seems to be owing to this, That philosophers have degraded the senses too much, and deprived them of the most important part of their office.

We are taught, that, by the senses, we have only certain ideas which we could not have otherwise. They are represented as powers by which we have sensations and ideas, not as powers by which we judge.

This notion of the senses I take to be very lame, and to contradict what nature and accurate reflection teach concerning them.

A man who has totally lost the sense of seeing, may retain very distinct notions of the various colours; but he cannot judge of colours, because he has lost the sense by which alone he could judge. By my eyes I not only have the ideas of a square and a circle, but I perceive this surface to be a square, that to be a circle.

By my ear, I not only have the idea of sounds, loud and soft, acute and grave, but I immediately perceive and judge this sound to be loud, that to be soft, this to be acute, that to be grave. Two or more synchronous sounds I perceive to be concordant, others to be discordant.

These are judgments of the senses. They have always been called and accounted such, by those whose minds are not tinctured by philosophical theories. They are the immediate testimony of nature by our senses; and we are so constituted by nature, that we must receive their testimony, for no other reason but because it is given by our senses.

In vain do sceptics endeavour to overturn this evidence by metaphysical reasoning. Though we should not be able to answer their arguments, we believe our senses still, and rest our most important concerns upon their testimony.

If this be a just notion of our external senses, as I conceive it is, our moral faculty may, I think, without impropriety, be called the *Moral Sense*.

In its dignity it is, without doubt, far superior to every other power of the mind; but there is this analogy between it and the

external senses, That, as by them we have not only the original conceptions of the various qualities of bodies, but the original judgment that this body has such a quality, that such another; so by our moral faculty, we have both the original conceptions of right and wrong in conduct, of merit and demerit, and the original judgments that this conduct is right, that is wrong; that this character has worth, that demerit.

The testimony of our moral faculty, like that of the external senses, is the testimony of nature, and we have the same reason to rely upon it.

The truths immediately testified by the external senses are the first principles from which we reason, with regard to the material world, and from which all our knowledge of it is deduced.

The truths immediately testified by our moral faculty, are the first principles of all moral reasoning, from which all our knowledge of our duty must be deduced.

By moral reasoning, I understand all reasoning that is brought to prove that such conduct is right, and deserving of moral approbation; or that it is wrong; or that it is indifferent, and, in itself, neither morally good nor ill.

I think, all we can properly call moral judgments, are reducible to one or other of these, as all human actions, considered in a moral view, are either good, or bad, or indifferent.

I know the term *moral reasoning* is often used by good writers in a more extensive sense; but, as the reasoning I now speak of is of a peculiar kind, distinct from all others, and, therefore, ought to have a distinct name, I take the liberty to limit the name of *moral reasoning* to this kind.

Let it be understood, therefore, that in the reasoning I call *moral*, the conclusion always is, That something in the conduct of moral agents is good or bad, in a greater or a less degree, or indifferent.

All reasoning must be grounded on first principles. This holds in moral reasoning, as in all other kinds. There must be, therefore, in morals, as in all other sciences, first or self-evident principles, on which all moral reasoning is grounded, and on

which it ultimately rests. From such self-evident principles, conclusions may be drawn synthetically with regard to the moral conduct of life; and particular duties or virtues may be traced back to such principles, analytically. But, without such principles, we can no more establish any conclusion in morals, than we can build a castle in the air, without any foundation.

An example or two will serve to illustrate this.

It is a first principle in morals, That we ought not to do to another what we should think wrong to be done to us in like circumstances. If a man is not capable of perceiving this in his cool moments, when he reflects seriously, he is not a moral agent, nor is he capable of being convinced of it by reasoning.

From what topic can you reason with such a man? You may possibly convince him by reasoning, that it is his interest to observe this rule; but this is not to convince him that it is his duty. To reason about justice with a man who sees nothing to be just or unjust, or about benevolence with a man who sees nothing in benevolence preferable to malice, is like reasoning with a blind man about colour, or with a deaf man about sound.

It is a question in morals that admits of reasoning, Whether, by the law of nature, a man ought to have only one wife?

We reason upon this question, by balancing the advantages and disadvantages to the family, and to society in general, that are naturally consequent both upon monogamy and polygamy. And, if it can be shown that the advantages are greatly upon the side of monogamy, we think the point is determined.

But, if a man does not perceive that he ought to regard the good of society, and the good of his wife and children, the reasoning can have no effect upon him, because he denies the first principle upon which it is grounded.

Suppose, again, that we reason for monogamy from the intention of nature, discovered by the proportion of males and of females that are born — a proportion which corresponds perfectly with monogamy, but by no means with polygamy — this argument can have no weight with a man who does not perceive that he ought to have a regard to the intention of nature.

Thus we shall find that all moral reasonings rest upon one

or more first principles of morals, whose truth is immediately perceived without reasoning, by all men come to years of understanding.

And this indeed is common to every branch of human knowledge that deserves the name of science. There must be first principles proper to that science, by which the whole superstructure is supported.

The first principles of all the sciences, must be the immediate dictates of our natural faculties; nor is it possible that we should have any other evidence of their truth. And in different sciences the faculties which dictate their first principles are very different.

Thus, in astronomy and in optics, in which such wonderful discoveries have been made, that the unlearned can hardly believe them to be within the reach of human capacity, the first principles are phenomena attested solely by that little organ the human eye. If we disbelieve its report, the whole of those two noble fabrics of science falls to pieces like the visions of the night.

The principles of music all depend upon the testimony of the ear. The principles of natural philosophy, upon the facts attested by the senses. The principles of mathematics, upon the necessary relations of quantities considered abstractly — such as, That equal quantities added to equal quantities make equal sums, and the like; which necessary relations are immediately perceived by the understanding.

The science of politics borrows its principles from what we know by experience of the character and conduct of man. We consider not what he ought to be, but what he is, and thence conclude what part he will act in different situations and circumstances. From such principles we reason concerning the causes and effects of different forms of government, laws, customs, and manners. If man were either a more perfect or a more imperfect, a better or a worse, creature than he is, politics would be a different science from what it is.

The first principles of morals are the immediate dictates of the moral faculty. They show us, not what man is, but what he ought to be. Whatever is immediately perceived to be just, honest, and honourable, in human conduct, carries moral obligation

along with it, and the contrary carries demerit and blame; and, from those moral obligations that are immediately perceived, all other moral obligations must be deduced by reasoning.

He that will judge of the colour of an object, must consult his eyes, in a good light, when there is no medium or contiguous objects that may give it a false tinge. But in vain will he consult every other faculty in this matter.

In like manner, he that will judge of the first principles of morals, must consult his conscience, or moral faculty, when he is calm and dispassionate, unbiassed by interest, affection, or fashion.

As we may rely upon the clear and distinct testimony of our eyes, concerning the colours and figures of the bodies about us, we have the same reason to rely with security upon the clear and unbiassed testimony of our conscience, with regard to what we ought and ought not to do. In many cases moral worth and demerit are discerned no less clearly by the last of those natural faculties, than figure and colour by the first.

The faculties which nature hath given us, are the only engines we can use to find out the truth. We cannot indeed prove that those faculties are not fallacious, unless God should give us new faculties to sit in judgment upon the old. But we are born under a necessity of trusting them.

Every man in his senses believes his eyes, his ears, and his other senses. He believes his consciousness with respect to his own thoughts and purposes; his memory, with regard to what is past; his understanding, with regard to abstract relations of things; and his taste, with regard to what is elegant and beautiful. And he has the same reason, and, indeed, is under the same necessity of believing the clear and unbiassed dictates of his conscience, with regard to what is honourable and what is base.

The sum of what has been said in this chapter is, That, by an original power of the mind, which we call *conscience*, or the *moral faculty*, we have the conceptions of right and wrong in human conduct, of merit and demerit, of duty and moral obligation, and our other moral conceptions; and that, by the same faculty, we perceive some things in human conduct to be right, and

others to be wrong; that the first principles of morals are the dictates of this faculty; and that we have the same reason to rely upon those dictates, as upon the determinations of our senses, or of our other natural faculties.[1]

ESSAY V. CHAPTER I. OF THE FIRST PRINCIPLES OF MORALS

Morals, like all other sciences, must have *first principles*, on which all moral reasoning is grounded.

In every branch of knowledge where disputes have been raised, it is useful to distinguish the first principles from the superstructure. They are the foundation on which the whole fabric of the science leans; and whatever is not supported by this foundation can have no stability.

In all rational belief, the thing believed is either itself a first principle, or it is by just reasoning deduced from first principles. When men differ about deductions of reasoning, the appeal must be to the rules of reasoning, which have been very unanimously fixed from the days of Aristotle. But when they differ about the first principle, the appeal is made to another tribunal — to that of *Common Sense.*

How the genuine decisions of Common Sense may be distinguished from the counterfeit, has been considered in Essay Sixth, on the *Intellectual Powers of Man*, chapter fourth, to which the reader is referred. What I would here observe is, That, as first principles differ from deductions or reasoning in the nature of their evidence, and must be tried by a different standard when they are called in question, it is of importance to know to which of these two classes a truth which we would examine, belongs. When they are not distinguished, men are apt to demand proof for everything they think fit to deny. And when we attempt to prove, by direct argument, what is really self-evident, the reasoning will always be inconclusive; for it will either take for

[1] This theory is virtually the same as that which founds morality on intelligence. The *Practical Reason* of Kant is not essentially different from the *Moral Sense*, the *Moral Faculty* of Reid and Stewart.

granted the thing to be proved, or something not more evident; and so, instead of giving strength to the conclusion, will rather tempt those to doubt of it who never did so before.

I propose, therefore, in this chapter, to point out some of the first principles or morals, without pretending to a complete enumeration.

The principles I am to mention, relate either [A] to *virtue in general,* or [B] to the different *particular branches of virtue,* or [C] to the *comparison of virtues* where they seem to interfere.

[A] 1. *There are some things in human conduct that merit approbation and praise, others that merit blame and punishment; and different degrees either of approbation or of blame, are due to different actions.*

2. *What is in no degree voluntary, can neither deserve moral approbation nor blame.*

3. *What is done from unavoidable necessity may be agreeable or disagreeable, useful or hurtful, but cannot be the object either of blame or of moral approbation.*

4. *Men may be highly culpable in omitting what they ought to have done, as well as in doing what they ought not.*

5. *We ought to use the best means we can to be well informed of our duty* — by serious attention to moral instruction; by observing what we approve, and what we disapprove, in other men, whether our acquaintance, or those whose actions are recorded in history; by reflecting often, in a calm and dispassionate hour, on our own past conduct, that we may discern what was wrong, what was right, and what might have been better; by deliberating coolly and impartially upon our future conduct, as far as we can foresee the opportunities we may have of doing good, or the temptations to do wrong; and by having this principle deeply fixed in our minds, that, as moral excellence is the true worth and glory of a man, so the knowledge of our duty is to every man, in every station of life, the most important of all knowledge.

6. *It ought to be our most serious concern to do our duty as far as we know it, and to fortify our minds against every temptation to deviate from it* — by maintaining a lively sense of the beauty of right conduct, and of its present and future reward, of the tur-

pitude of vice, and of its bad consequences here and hereafter; by having always in our eye the noblest examples; by the habit of subjecting our passions to the government of reason; by firm purposes and resolutions with regard to our conduct; by avoiding occasions of temptation when we can; and by imploring the aid of Him who made us, in every hour of temptation.

These principles concerning virtue and vice *in general*, must appear self-evident to every man who hath a conscience, and who hath taken pains to exercise this natural power of his mind. I proceed to others that are *more particular.*

[B] 1. *We ought to prefer a greater good, though more distant, to a less; and a less evil to a greater.*

A regard to our own good, though we had no conscience, dictates this principle; and we cannot help disapproving the man that acts contrary to it, as deserving to lose the good which he wantonly threw away, and to suffer the evil which he knowingly brought upon his own head.

We observed before, that the ancient moralists, and many among the modern, have deduced the whole of morals from this principle, and that, when we make a right estimate of goods and evils according to their degree, their dignity, their duration, and according as they are more or less in our power, it leads to the practice of every virtue. More directly, indeed, to the virtues of self-government, to prudence, to temperance, and to fortitude; and, though more indirectly, even to justice, humanity, and all the social virtues, when their influence upon our happiness is well understood.

Though it be not the noblest principle of conduct, it has this peculiar advantage, that its force is felt by the most ignorant, even by the most abandoned.

Let a man's moral judgment be ever so little improved by exercise, or ever so much corrupted by bad habits, he cannot be indifferent to his own happiness or misery. When he is become insensible to every nobler motive to right conduct, he cannot be insensible to this. And though to act from this motive solely may be called *prudence* rather than *virtue*, yet this prudence deserves some regard upon its own account, and much more

as it is the friend and ally of virtue, and the enemy of all vice; and as it gives a favourable testimony of virtue to those who are deaf to every other recommendation.

If a man can be induced to do his duty even from a regard to his own happiness, he will soon find reason to love virtue for her own sake, and to act from motives less mercenary.

I cannot therefore approve of those moralists who would banish all persuasives to virtue taken from the consideration of private good. In the present state of human nature these are not useless to the best, and they are the only means left of reclaiming the abandoned.

2. *As far as the intention of nature appears in the constitution of man, we ought to comply with that intention, and to act agreeably to it.*

The Author of our being hath given us not only the power of acting within a limited sphere, but various principles or springs of action, of different nature and dignity, to direct us in the exercise of our active power.

From the constitution of every species of the inferior animals, and especially from the active principles which nature has given them, we easily perceive the manner of life for which nature intended them; and they uniformly act the part to which they are led by their constitution, without any reflection upon it, or intention of obeying its dictates. Man only, of the inhabitants of this world, is made capable of observing his own constitution, what kind of life it is made for, and of acting according to that intention, or contrary to it. He only is capable of yielding an intentional obedience to the dictates of his nature, or of rebelling against them.

In treating of the principles of action in man, it has been shown, that, as his natural instincts and bodily appetites are well adapted to the preservation of his natural life, and to the continuance of the species; so his natural desires, affections, and passions, when uncorrupted by vicious habits, and under the government of the leading principles of reason and conscience, are excellently fitted for the rational and social life. Every vicious action shows an excess, or defect, or wrong direction of some natural spring of

action, and therefore may, very justly, be said to be unnatural. Every virtuous action agrees with the uncorrupted principles of human nature.

The Stoics defined Virtue to be *a life according to nature.* Some of them more accurately, *a life according to the nature of man, in so far as it is superior to that of brutes.* The life of a brute is according to the nature of the brute; but it is neither virtuous nor vicious. The life of a moral agent cannot be according to his nature, unless it be virtuous. That conscience which is in every man's breast, is the law of God written in his heart, which he cannot disobey without acting unnaturally, and being self-condemned.

The intention of nature, in the various active principles of man — in the desires of power, of knowledge, and of esteem, in the affection to children, to near relations, and to the communities to which we belong, in gratitude, in compassion, and even in resentment and emulation — is very obvious, and has been pointed out in treating of those principles. Nor is it less evident, that reason and conscience are given us to regulate the inferior principles, so that they may conspire, in a regular and consistent plan of life, in pursuit of some worthy end.

3. *No man is born for himself only.* Every man, therefore, ought to consider himself as a member of the common society of mankind, and of those subordinate societies to which he belongs, such as family, friends, neighbourhood, country, and to do as much good as he can and as little hurt to the societies of which he is a part.

This axiom leads directly to the practice of every social virtue, and indirectly to the virtues of self-government, by which only we can be qualified for discharging the duty we owe to society.

4. *In every case, we ought to act that part towards another, which we would judge to be right in him to act toward us, if we were in his circumstances and he in ours;* or, more generally — *What we approve in others, that we ought to practice in like circumstances, and what we condemn in others, we ought not to do.*

If there be any such thing as right and wrong in the conduct

of moral agents, it must be the same to all in the same circumstances.

We stand all in the same relation to Him who made us, and will call us to account for our conduct; for with Him there is no respect of persons. We stand in the same relation to one another as members of the great community of mankind. The duties consequent upon the different ranks and offices and relations of men are the same to all in the same circumstances.

It is not want of judgment, but want of candour and impartiality, that hinders men from discerning what they owe to others. They are quicksighted enough in discerning what is due to themselves. When they are injured, or ill-treated, they see it, and feel resentment. It is the want of candour that makes men use one measure for the duty they owe to others, and another measure for the duty that others owe to them in like circumstances. That men ought to judge with candour, as in all other cases, so especially in what concerns their moral conduct, is surely self-evident to every intelligent being. The man who takes offence when he is injured in his person, in his property, in his good name, pronounces judgment against himself if he act so toward his neighbour.

As the equity and obligation of this rule of conduct is self-evident to every man who hath a conscience; so it is, of all the rules of morality, the most comprehensive, and truly deserves the encomium given it by the highest authority, that "*it is the law and the prophets.*"

It comprehends every rule of justice without exception. It comprehends all the relative duties, arising either from the more permanent relations of parent and child, of master and servant, of magistrate and subject, of husband and wife, or from the more transient relations of rich and poor, of buyer and seller, of debtor and creditor, of benefactor and beneficiary, of friend and enemy. It comprehends every duty of charity and humanity, and even of courtesy and good manners.

Nay, I think, that, without any force or straining, it extends even to the duties of self-government. For, as every man approves in others the virtues of prudence, temperance, self-command,

and fortitude, he must perceive that what is right in others must be right in himself in like circumstances.

To sum up all, he who acts invariably by this rule will never deviate from the path of his duty, but from an error of judgment. And, as he feels the obligation that he and all men are under to use the best means in his power to have his judgment well-informed in matters of duty, his errors will only be such as are invincible.

It may be observed, that this axiom supposes a faculty in man by which he can distinguish right conduct from wrong. It supposes also, that, by this faculty, we easily perceive the right and the wrong in other men that are indifferent to us; but are very apt to be blinded by the partiality of selfish passions when the case concerns ourselves. Every claim we have against others is apt to be magnified by self-love, when viewed directly. A change of persons removes this prejudice, and brings the claim to appear in its just magnitude.

5. *To every man who believes the existence, the perfections, and the providence of God, the veneration and submission we owe to him is self-evident.* Right sentiments of the Deity and of his works, not only make the duty we owe to him obvious to every intelligent being, but likewise add the authority of a Divine law to every rule of right conduct.

[C] There is another class of axioms in morals, by which, when there seems to be an *opposition* between the actions that different virtues lead to, we determine to which the *preference* is due.

Between the several virtues, as they are dispositions of mind, or determinations of will, to act according to a certain general rule, there can be no opposition. They dwell together most amicably, and give mutual aid and ornament, without the possibility of hostility or opposition, and, taken altogether, make one uniform and consistent rule of conduct. But, between particular external actions, which different virtues would lead to, there may be an opposition. Thus, the same man may be in his heart, generous, grateful, and just. These dispositions strengthen, but never can weaken one another. Yet it may happen, that an

external action which generosity or gratitude solicits, justice may forbid.

That in all such cases, *unmerited generosity should yield to gratitude, and both to justice*, is self-evident. Nor is it less so, that *unmerited beneficence to those who are at ease should yield to compassion to the miserable*, and *external acts of picty to works of mercy*, because God loves mercy more than sacrifice.

At the same time, we perceive, that those acts of virtue which ought to yield in the case of a competition, have most intrinsic worth when there is no competition. Thus, it is evident that there is more worth in pure and unmerited benevolence than in compassion, more in compassion than in gratitude, and more in gratitude than in justice.

I call these *first principles*, because they appear to me to have in themselves an intuitive evidence which I cannot resist. I find I can express them in other words. I can illustrate them by examples and authorities, and perhaps can deduce one of them from another; but I am not able to deduce them from other principles that are more evident. And I find the best moral reasonings of authors I am acquainted with, ancient and modern, Heathen and Christian, to be grounded upon one or more of them.

The evidence of mathematical axioms is not discerned till men come to a certain degree of maturity of understanding. A boy must have formed the general conception of *quantity*, and of *more* and *less* and *equal*, of *sum* and *difference;* and he must have been accustomed to judge of these relations in matters of common life, before he can perceive the evidence of the mathematical axiom — that equal quantities, added to equal quantities, make equal sums.

In like manner, our Moral Judgment or Conscience grows to maturity from an imperceptible seed, planted by our Creator. When we are capable of contemplating the actions of other men, or of reflecting upon our own calmly and dispassionately, we begin to perceive in them the qualities of honest and dishonest, of honourable and base, of right and wrong, and to feel the sentiments of moral approbation and disapprobation.

These sentiments are at first feeble, easily warped by passions and prejudices, and apt to yield to authority. By use and time, the judgment, in morals, as in other matters, gathers strength, and feels more vigour. We begin to distinguish the dictates of passion from those of cool reason, and to perceive that it is not always safe to rely upon the judgment of others. By an impulse of nature, we venture to judge for ourselves, as we venture to walk by ourselves.

There is a strong analogy between the progress of the body from infancy to maturity, and the progress of all the powers of the mind. This progression in both is the work of nature, and in both may be greatly aided or hurt by proper education. It is natural to a man to be able to walk, or run, or leap; but, if his limbs had been kept in fetters from his birth, he would have none of those powers. It is no less natural to a man trained in society, and accustomed to judge of his own actions and those of other men, to perceive a right and a wrong, an honourable and a base, in human conduct; and to such a man, I think, the principles of morals I have above mentioned will appear self-evident. Yet there may be individuals of the human species so little accustomed to think or judge of anything but of gratifying their animal appetites, as to have hardly any conception of right or wrong in conduct, or any moral judgment; as there certainly are some who have not the conceptions and the judgment necessary to understand the axioms of geometry.

From the principles above mentioned, the whole system of moral conduct follows so easily, and with so little aid of reasoning, that every man of common understanding, who wishes to know his duty, may know it. The path of duty is a plain path, which the upright in heart can rarely mistake. Such it must be, since every man is bound to walk in it. There are some intricate cases in morals which admit of disputation; but these seldom occur in practice; and, when they do, the learned disputant has no great advantage: for the unlearned man, who uses the best means in his power to know his duty, and acts according to his knowledge, is inculpable in the sight of God and man. He may err, but he is not guilty of immorality.

IMMANUEL KANT

(1724–1804)

THE METAPHYSIC OF MORALITY

Selections translated from the German by*

JOHN WATSON

SECTION I. TRANSITION FROM ORDINARY MORAL CONCEPTIONS TO THE PHILOSOPHICAL CONCEPTION OF MORALITY

NOTHING in the whole world, or even outside of the world, can possibly be regarded as good without limitation except a *good will*. No doubt it is a good and desirable thing to have intelligence, sagacity, judgment, and other intellectual gifts, by whatever name they may be called; it is also good and desirable in many respects to possess by nature such qualities as courage, resolution, and perseverance; but all these gifts of nature may be in the highest degree pernicious and hurtful, if the will which directs them, or what is called the *character*, is not itself good. The same thing applies to *gifts of fortune*. Power, wealth, honour, even good health, and that general well-being and contentment with one's lot which we call *happiness*, give rise to pride and not infrequently to insolence, if a man's will is not good; nor can a reflective and impartial spectator ever look with satisfaction upon the unbroken prosperity of a man who is destitute of the ornament of a pure and good will. A good will would therefore seem to be the indispensable condition without which no one is even worthy to be happy.

A man's will is good, not because the consequences which flow from it are good, nor because it is capable of attaining the ends

* From Kant's *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten*, Riga, 1785; 2. Aufl. 1787. Reprinted from *The Philosophy of Kant, as contained in extracts from his writings*, selected and translated by John Watson, LL. D., new ed., Glasgow, 1901.

which it seeks, but it is good in itself, or because it wills the good. By a good will is not meant mere well-wishing; it consists in a resolute employment of all the means within one's reach, and its intrinsic value is in no way increased by success or lessened by failure.

This idea of the absolute value of mere will seems so extraordinary that, although it is endorsed even by the popular judgment, we must subject it to careful scrutiny.

If nature had meant to provide simply for the maintenance, the well-being, in a word the happiness, of beings which have reason and will, it must be confessed that, in making use of their reason, it has hit upon a very poor way of attaining its end. As a matter of fact the very worst way a man of refinement and culture can take to secure enjoyment and happiness is to make use of his reason for that purpose. Hence there is apt to arise in his mind a certain degree of *misology*, or hatred of reason. Finding that the arts which minister to luxury, and even the sciences, instead of bringing him happiness, only lay a heavier yoke on his neck, he at length comes to envy, rather than to despise, men of less refinement, who follow more closely the promptings of their natural impulses, and pay little heed to what reason tells them to do or to leave undone. It must at least be admitted, that one may deny reason to have much or indeed any value in the production of happiness and contentment, without taking a morose or ungrateful view of the goodness with which the world is governed. Such a judgment really means that life has another and a much nobler end than happiness, and that the true vocation of reason is to secure that end.

The true object of reason then, in so far as it is practical, or capable of influencing the will, must be to produce a will which is *good in itself*, and not merely good *as a means* to something else. This will is not the only or the whole good, but it is the highest good, and the condition of all other good, even of the desire for happiness itself. It is therefore not inconsistent with the wisdom of nature that the cultivation of reason which is essential to the furtherance of its first and unconditioned object, the production of a good will, should, in this life at least, in many

ways limit, or even make impossible, the attainment of happiness, which is its second and conditioned object.

To bring to clear consciousness the conception of a will which is good in itself, a conception already familiar to the popular mind, let us examine the conception of *duty*, which involves the idea of a good will as manifested under certain subjective limitations and hindrances.

I pass over actions which are admittedly violations of duty, for these, however useful they may be in the attainment of this or that end, manifestly do not proceed *from* duty. I set aside also those actions which are not actually inconsistent with duty, but which yet are done under the impulse of some natural inclination, although *not a direct inclination* to do these particular actions; for in these it is easy to determine whether the action that is consistent with duty, is done *from duty* or with some selfish object in view. It is more difficult to make a clear distinction of motives when there is a *direct* inclination to do a certain action, which is itself in conformity with duty. The preservation of one's own life, for instance, is a duty; but, as every one has a natural inclination to preserve his life, the anxious care which most men usually devote to this object, has no intrinsic value, nor the maxim from which they act any moral import. They preserve their life *in accordance with* duty, but not *because of* duty. But, suppose adversity and hopeless sorrow to have taken away all desire for life; suppose that the wretched man would welcome death as a release, and yet takes means to prolong his life simply from a sense of duty; then his maxim has a genuine moral import.

But, secondly, an action that is done from duty gets its moral value, *not from the object* which it is intended to secure, but from the maxim by which it is determined. Accordingly, the action has the same moral value whether the object is attained or not, if only the *principle* by which the will is determined to act is independent of every object of sensuous desire. What was said above makes it clear, that it is not the object aimed at, or, in other words, the consequences which flow from an action when these are made the end and motive of the will, that can give to the action an unconditioned and moral value. In what, then, can

the moral value of an action consist, if it does not lie in the will itself, as directed to the attainment of a certain object? It can lie only in the principle of the will, no matter whether the object sought can be attained by the action or not. For the will stands as it were at the parting of the ways, between its *a priori* principle, which is formal, and its *a posteriori*, material motive. As so standing it must be determined by something, and, as no action which is done from duty can be determined by a material principle, it can be determined only by the formal principle of all volition.

From the two propositions just set forth a third directly follows, which may be thus stated: *Duty is the obligation to act from reverence for law.* Now, I may have a natural *inclination* for the object that I expect to follow from my action, but I can never have *reverence* for that which is not a spontaneous activity of my will, but merely an effect of it; neither can I have reverence for any natural inclination, whether it is my own or another's. If it is my own, I can at most only approve of it; if it is manifested by another, I may regard it as conducive to my own interest, and hence I may in certain cases even be said to have a love for it. But the only thing which I can reverence or which can lay me under an obligation to act, is the law which is connected with my will, not as a consequence, but as a principle; a principle which is not dependent upon natural inclination, but overmasters it, or at least allows it to have no influence whatever in determining my course of action. Now if an action which is done out of regard for duty sets entirely aside the influence of natural inclination and along with it every object of the will, nothing else is left by which the will can be determined but objectively the *law* itself, and subjectively *pure reverence* for the law as a principle of action. Thus there arises the maxim, to obey the moral law even at the sacrifice of all my natural inclinations.

The supreme good which we call moral can therefore be nothing but the *idea of the law* in itself, in so far as it is this idea which determines the will, and not any consequences that are expected to follow. Only a *rational* being can have such an idea, and hence a man who acts from the idea of the law is already

morally good, no matter whether the consequences which he expects from his action follow or not.

Now what must be the nature of a law, the idea of which is to determine the will, even apart from the effects expected to follow, and which is therefore itself entitled to be called good absolutely and without qualification? As the will must not be moved to act from any desire for the results expected to follow from obedience to a certain law, the only principle of the will which remains is that of the conformity of actions to universal law. In all cases I must act in such a way *that I can at the same time will that my maxim should become a universal law.* This is what is meant by conformity to law pure and simple; and this is the principle which serves, and must serve, to determine the will, if the idea of duty is not to be regarded as empty and chimerical. As a matter of fact the judgments which we are wont to pass upon conduct perfectly agree with this principle, and in making them we always have it before our eyes.

May I, for instance, under the pressure of circumstances, make a promise which I have no intention of keeping? The question is not, whether it is prudent to make a false promise, but whether it is morally right. To enable me to answer this question shortly and conclusively, the best way is for me to ask myself whether it would satisfy me that the maxim to extricate myself from embarrassment by giving a false promise should have the force of a universal law, applying to others as well as to myself. And I see at once, that, while I can certainly will the lie, I cannot will that lying should be a universal law. If lying were universal, there would, properly speaking, be no promises whatever. I might say that I intended to do a certain thing at some future time, but nobody would believe me, or if he did at the moment trust to my promise, he would afterwards pay me back in my own coin. My maxim thus proves itself to be self-destructive, so soon as it is taken as a universal law.

Duty, then, consists in the obligation to act from *pure* reverence for the moral law. To this motive all others must give way, for it is the condition of a will which is good *in itself*, and which has a value with which nothing else is comparable.

There is, however, in man a strong feeling of antagonism to the commands of duty, although his reason tells him that those commands are worthy of the highest reverence. For man not only possesses reason, but he has certain natural wants and inclinations, the complete satisfaction of which he calls happiness. These natural inclinations clamorously demand to have their seemingly reasonable claims respected; but reason issues its commands inflexibly, refusing to promise anything to the natural desires, and treating their claims with a sort of neglect and contempt. From this there arises a *natural dialectic*, that is, a disposition to explain away the strict laws of duty, to cast doubt upon their validity, or at least, upon their purity and stringency, and in this way to make them yield to the demands of the natural inclinations.

Thus men are forced to go beyond the narrow circle of ideas within which their reason ordinarily moves, and to take a step into the field of *moral philosophy*, not indeed from any perception of speculative difficulties, but simply on practical grounds. The practical reason of men cannot be long exercised any more than the theoretical, without falling insensibly into a dialectic, which compels it to call in the aid of philosophy; and in the one case as in the other, rest can be found only in a thorough criticism of human reason.

SECTION II. TRANSITION FROM POPULAR MORAL PHILOSOPHY TO THE METAPHYSIC OF MORALITY

So far, we have drawn our conception of duty from the manner in which men employ it in the ordinary exercise of their practical reason. The conception of duty, however, we must not suppose to be therefore derived from experience. On the contrary, we hear frequent complaints, the justice of which we cannot but admit, that no one can point to a single instance in which an action has undoubtedly been done purely from a regard for duty; that there are certainly many actions which are not *opposed* to duty, but

none which are indisputably done *from* duty and therefore have a moral value. Nothing indeed can secure us against the complete loss of our ideas of duty, and maintain in the soul a well-grounded respect for the moral law, but the clear conviction, that reason issues its commands on its own authority, without caring in the least whether the actions of men have, as a matter of fact, been done purely from ideas of duty. For reason commands inflexibly that certain actions should be done, which perhaps never have been done; actions, the very possibility of which may seem doubtful to one who bases everything upon experience. Perfect disinterestedness in friendship, for instance, is demanded of every man, although there may never have been a sincere friend; for pure friendship is bound up with the idea of duty as duty, and belongs to the very idea of a reason which determines the will on *a priori* grounds, prior to all experience.

It is, moreover, beyond dispute, that unless we are to deny to morality all truth and all reference to a possible object, the moral law has so wide an application that it is binding, not merely upon man, but upon all *rational beings*, and not merely under certain contingent conditions, and with certain limitations, but absolutely and necessarily. And it is plain, that no experience could ever lead us to suppose that laws of this apodictic character are even possible.

There is, therefore, no genuine supreme principle of morality, which is not independent of all experience, and based entirely upon pure reason. If, then, we are to have a philosophy of morality at all, as distinguished from a popular moral philosophy, we may take it for granted without further investigation, that moral conceptions, together with the principles which flow from them, are given *a priori* and must be presented in their generality (*in abstracto*).

Such a metaphysic of morality, which must be entirely free from all admixture of empirical psychology, theology, physics, and hyperphysics, and above all from all occult or, as we may call them, hypophysical qualities, is not only indispensable as a foundation for a sound theory of duties, but it is also of the highest importance in the practical realization of moral precepts. For

the pure idea of duty, unmixed with any foreign ingredient of sensuous desire, in a word, the idea of the moral law, influences the heart of man much more powerfully through his reason, which in this way only becomes conscious that it can of itself be practical, than do all the motives which have their source in experience. Conscious of its own dignity, the moral law treats all sensuous desires with contempt, and is able to master them one by one.

From what has been said it is evident, that all moral conceptions have their seat and origin in reason entirely *a priori*, and are apprehended by the ordinary reason of men as well as by reason in its purely speculative activity. We have also seen that it is of the greatest importance, not only in the construction by speculative reason of a theory of morality, but also with a view to the practical conduct of life, to derive the conceptions and laws of morality from pure reason, to present them pure and unmixed, and to mark out the sphere of this whole practical or pure knowledge of reason. Nor is it permissible, in seeking to determine the whole faculty of pure practical reason, to make its principles dependent upon the peculiar nature of human reason, as we were allowed to do, and sometimes were even forced to do, in speculative philosophy, for moral laws must apply to every rational being, and must therefore be derived from the very conception of a rational being as such.

To show the need of advancing not only from the common moral judgments of men to the philosophical, but from a popular philosophy, which merely gropes its way by the help of examples, to a metaphysic of morality, we must begin at the point where the practical faculty of reason supplies general rules of action, and exhibit clearly the steps by which it attains to the conception of duty.

Everything in nature acts in conformity with law. Only a rational being has the faculty of acting in conformity with the *idea* of law, or from principles; only a rational being, in other words, has a will. And as without reason actions cannot proceed from laws, will is simply practical reason. If the will is infallibly determined by reason, the actions of a rational being are subjectively as well as objectively necessary; that is, will must be re-

garded as a faculty of choosing *that only* which reason, independently of natural inclination, declares to be practically necessary or good. On the other hand, if the will is not invariably determined by reason alone, but is subject to certain subjective conditions or motives, which are not always in harmony with the objective conditions; if the will, as actually is the case with man, is not in perfect conformity with reason; actions which are recognized to be objectively necessary, are subjectively contingent. The determination of such a will according to objective laws is therefore called *obligation*. That is to say, if the will of a rational being is not absolutely good, we conceive of it as capable of being determined by objective laws of reason, but not as by its very nature necessarily obeying them.

The idea that a certain principle is objective, and binding upon the will, is a command of reason, and the statement of the command in a formula is an *imperative*.

All imperatives are expressed by the word *ought*, to indicate that the will upon which they are binding is not by its subjective constitution necessarily determined in conformity with the objective law of reason. An imperative says, that the doing, or leaving undone of a certain thing would be good, but it addresses a will which does not always do a thing simply because it is good. Now, that is practically *good* which determines the will by ideas of reason, in other words, that which determines it, not by subjective influences, but by principles which are objective, or apply to all rational beings as such. *Good* and *pleasure* are quite distinct. Pleasure results from the influence of purely subjective causes upon the will of the subject, and these vary with the susceptibility of this or that individual, while a principle of reason is valid for all.

A perfectly good will would, like the will of man, stand under objective laws, laws of the good, but it could not be said to be under an *obligation* to act in conformity with those laws. Such a will by its subjective constitution could be determined only by the idea of the good. In reference to the Divine will, or any other holy will, imperatives have no meaning; for here the will is by its very nature necessarily in harmony with the law, and

therefore *ought* has no application to it. Imperatives are formulæ, which express merely the relation of objective laws of volition in general to the imperfect will of this or that rational being, as for instance, the will of man.

Now, all imperatives command either *hypothetically* or *categorically*. A hypothetical imperative states that a certain thing must be done, if something else which is willed, or at least might be willed, is to be attained. The categorical imperative declares that an act is in itself or objectively necessary, without any reference to another end.

Every practical law represents a possible action as good, and therefore as obligatory for a subject that is capable of being determined to act by reason. Hence all imperatives are formulæ for the determination of an action which is obligatory according to the principle of a will that is in some sense good. If the action is good only because it is a means to *something else*, the imperative is *hypothetical;* if the action is conceived to be good *in itself*, the imperative, as the necessary principle of a will that in itself conforms to reason, is *categorical.*

An imperative, then, states what possible action of mine would be good. It supplies the practical rule for a will which does not at once do an act simply because it is good, either because the subject does not know it to be good, or because, knowing it to be good, he is influenced by maxims which are opposed to the objective principles of a practical reason.

The hypothetical imperative says only that an action is good relatively to a certain *possible* end or to a certain *actual* end. In the former case it is *problematic*, in the latter case *assertoric.* The categorical imperative, which affirms that an action is in itself or objectively necessary without regard to an end, that is, without regard to any other end than itself, is an *apodictic* practical principle.

Whatever is within the power of a rational being may be conceived to be capable of being willed by some rational being, and hence the principles which determine what actions are necessary in the attainment of certain possible ends, are infinite in number.

Yet there is one thing which we may assume that all finite

rational beings actually make their end, and there is therefore one object which may safely be regarded, not simply as something that they *may* seek, but as something that by a necessity of their nature they actually *do* seek. This object is *happiness*. The hypothetical imperative, which affirms the practical necessity of an action as the means of attaining happiness, is *assertoric*. We must not think of happiness as simply a possible and problematic end, but as an end that we may with confidence presuppose *a priori* to be sought by every one, belonging as it does to the very nature of man. Now skill in the choice of means to his own greatest well-being may be called *prudence*, taking the word in its more restricted sense. An imperative, therefore, which relates merely to the choice of means to one's own happiness, that is, a maxim of prudence, must be hypothetical; it commands an action, not absolutely, but only as a means to another end.

Lastly, there is an imperative which directly commands an action, without presupposing as its condition that some other end is to be attained by means of that action. This imperative is *categorical*. It has to do, not with the matter of an action and the result expected to follow from it, but simply with the form and principle from which the action itself proceeds. The action is essentially good if the motive of the agent is good, let the consequences be what they may. This imperative may be called the imperative of *morality*.

How are all these imperatives possible? The question is not, How is an action which an imperative commands actually realized? but, How can we think of the will as placed under obligation by each of those imperatives? Very little need be said to show how an imperative of skill is possible. He who wills the end, wills also the means in his power which are indispensable to the attainment of the end. Looking simply at the act of will, we must say that this proposition is analytic. If a certain object is to follow as an effect from my volition, my causality must be conceived as active in the production of the effect, or as employing the means by which the effect will take place. The imperative, therefore, simply states that in the conception of the willing of this end there is directly implied the conception of actions

necessary to this end. No doubt certain synthetic propositions are required to determine the particular means by which a given end may be attained, but these have nothing to do with the principle or act of the will, but merely state how the object may actually be realized.

Were it as easy to give a definite conception of happiness as of a particular end, the imperatives of prudence would be of exactly the same nature as the imperatives of skill, and would therefore be analytic. For, we should be able to say, that he who wills the end wills also the only means in his power for the attainment of the end. But, unfortunately, the conception of happiness is so definite, that, although every man desires to obtain it, he is unable to give a definite and self-consistent statement of what he actually desires and wills. The truth is, that, strictly speaking, the imperatives of prudence are not commands at all. They do not say that actions are objective or *necessary*, and hence they must be regarded as counsels (*consilia*), not as commands (*præcepta*) of reason. Still, the imperative of prudence would be an analytic proposition, if the means to happiness could only be known with certainty. For the only difference in the two cases is that in the imperative of skill the end is merely possible, in the imperative of prudence it is actually given; and as in both all that is commanded is the means to an end which is assumed to be willed, the imperative which commands that he who wills the end should also will the means, is in both cases analytic. There is therefore no real difficulty in seeing how an imperative of prudence is possible.

The only question which is difficult of solution, is, how the imperative of morality is possible. Here the imperative is not hypothetical, and hence we cannot derive its objective necessity from any presupposition. Nor must it for a moment be forgotten, that an imperative of this sort cannot be established by instances taken from experience. We must therefore find out by careful investigation, whether imperatives which seem to be categorical may not be simply hypothetical imperatives in disguise.

One thing is plain at the very outset, namely, that only a categorical imperative can have the dignity of a practical *law*,

and that the other imperatives, while they may no doubt be called *principles* of the will, cannot be called laws. An action which is necessary merely as a means to an arbitrary end, may be regarded as itself contingent, and if the end is abandoned, the maxim which prescribes the action has no longer any force. An unconditioned command, on the other hand, does not permit the will to choose the opposite, and therefore it carries with it the necessity which is essential to a law.

It is, however, very hard to see how there can be a categorical imperative or law of morality at all. Such a law is an *a priori* synthetic proposition, and we cannot expect that there will be less difficulty in showing how a proposition of that sort is possible in the sphere of morality than we have found it to be in the sphere of knowledge.

In attempting to solve this problem, we shall first of all inquire, whether the mere conception of a categorical imperative may not perhaps supply us with a formula, which contains the only proposition that can possibly be a categorical imperative. The more difficult question, how such an absolute command is possible at all, will require a special investigation, which must be postponed to the last section.

If I take the mere conception of a hypothetical imperative, I cannot tell what it may contain until the condition under which it applies is presented to me. But I can tell at once from the very conception of a categorical imperative what it must contain. Viewed apart from the law, the imperative simply affirms that the maxim, or subjective principle of action, must conform to the objective principle or law. Now the law contains no condition to which it is restricted, and hence nothing remains but the statement, that the maxim ought to conform to the universality of the law as such. It is only this conformity to law that the imperative can be said to represent as necessary.

There is therefore but one categorical imperative, which may be thus stated: *Act in conformity with that maxim, and that maxim only, which you can at the same time will to be a universal law.*

Now, if from this single imperative, as from their principle,

all imperatives of duty can be derived, we shall at least be able to indicate what we mean by the categorical imperative and what the conception of it implies, although we shall not be able to say whether the conception of duty may not itself be empty.

The universality of the law which governs the succession of events, is what we mean by *nature*, in the most general sense, that is, the existence of things, in so far as their existence is determined in conformity with universal laws. The universal imperative of duty might therefore be put in this way: *Act as if the maxim from which you act were to become through your will a universal law of nature.*

If we attend to what goes on in ourselves in every transgression of a duty, we find that we do not will that our maxim should become a universal law. We find it in fact impossible to do so, and we really will that the opposite of our maxim should remain a universal law, at the same time that we assume the liberty of making an exception in favour of natural inclination in our own case, or perhaps only for this particular occasion. Hence, if we looked at all cases from the same point of view, that is, from the point of view of reason, we should see that there was here a contradiction in our will. The contradiction is, that a certain principle is admitted to be necessary objectively or as a universal law, and yet is held not to be universal subjectively, but to admit of exceptions. What we do is, to consider our action at one time from the point of view of a will that is in perfect conformity with reason, and at another time from the point of view of a will that is under the influence of natural inclination. There is, therefore, here no real contradiction, but merely an antagonism of inclination to the command of reason. The universality of the principle is changed into a mere generality, in order that the practical principle of reason may meet the maxim half way. Not only is this limitation condemned by our own impartial judgment, but it proves that we actually recognize the validity of the categorical imperative, and merely allow ourselves to make a few exceptions in our own favour which we try to consider as of no importance, or as a necessary concession to circumstances.

This much at least we have learned, that if the idea of duty

is to have any meaning and to lay down the laws of our actions, it must be expressed in categorical and not in hypothetical imperatives. We have also obtained a clear and distinct conception (a very important thing), of what is implied in a categorical imperative which contains the principle of duty for all cases, granting such an imperative to be possible at all. But we have not yet been able to prove *a priori*, that there actually is such an imperative; that there is a practical law which commands absolutely on its own authority, and is independent of all sensuous impulses; and that duty consists in obedience to this law.

In seeking to reach this point, it is of the greatest importance to observe, that the reality of this principle cannot possibly be derived from the *peculiar constitution of human nature*. For by duty is meant the practically unconditioned necessity of an act, and hence we can show that duty is a law for the will of all human beings, only by showing that it is applicable to all rational beings, or rather to all rational beings to whom an imperative applies at all.

The question, then, is this: Is it a necessary law *for all rational beings*, that they must always estimate the value of their actions by asking whether they can will that their maxims should serve as universal laws? If there is such a law, it must be possible to prove entirely *a priori*, that it is bound up with the very idea of the will of a rational being. To show that there is such a connection we must, however reluctantly, take a step into the realm of metaphysic; not, however, into the realm of speculative philosophy, but into the metaphysic of morality. For we have here to deal with objective practical laws, and therefore with the relation of the will to itself, in so far as it is determined purely by reason. All relation of the will to what is empirical is excluded as a matter of course, for if reason determines the relation *entirely by itself*, it must necessarily do so *a priori*.

Will is conceived of as a faculty of determining itself to action *in accordance with the idea of certain laws*. Such a faculty can belong only to a rational being. Now that which serves as an objective principle for the self-determination of the will is an *end*, and if this end is given purely by reason, it must hold for

all rational beings. On the other hand, that which is merely the condition of the possibility of an action the effect of which is the end, is called the *means*. The subjective ground of desire is natural inclination, the objective ground of volition is a motive; hence there is a distinction between subjective ends, which depend upon natural inclination, and objective ends, which are connected with motives that hold for every rational being. Practical principles that abstract from all subjective ends are *formal;* those that presuppose subjective ends, and therefore natural inclinations, are *material.* The ends which a rational being arbitrarily sets before himself as material ends to be produced by his actions, are all merely relative; for that which gives to them their value is simply their relation to the peculiar susceptibility of the subject. They can therefore yield no universal and necessary principles, or practical laws, applicable to all rational beings, and binding upon every will. Upon such relative ends, therefore, only hypothetical imperatives can be based.

Suppose, however, that there is something the existence of which has in itself an absolute value, something which, *as an end in itself*, can be a ground of definite laws; then, there would lie in that, and only in that, the ground of a possible categorical imperative or practical law.

Now, I say, that man, and indeed every rational being as such, *exists* as an end in himself, *not merely as a means* to be made use of by this or that will, and therefore man in all his actions, whether these are directed towards himself or towards other rational beings, must always be regarded as an end. No object of natural desire has more than a conditioned value; for if the natural desires, and the wants to which they give rise, did not exist, the object to which they are directed would have no value at all. So far are the natural desires and wants from having an absolute value, so far are they from being sought simply for themselves, that every rational being must wish to be entirely free from their influence. The value of every object which human action is the means of obtaining, is, therefore, always conditioned. And even beings whose existence depends upon nature, not upon our will, if they are without reason have only the relative value of means, and are

therefore called *things*. Rational beings, on the other hand, are called *persons*, because their very nature shows them to be ends in themselves, that is, something which cannot be made use of simply as a means. A person being thus an object of respect, a certain limit is placed upon arbitrary will. Persons are not purely subjective ends, whose existence has a value *for us* as the effect of our actions, but they are *objective ends*, or beings whose existence is an end in itself, for which no other end can be substituted. If all value were conditioned, and therefore contingent, it would be impossible to show that there is any supreme practical principle whatever.

If, then, there is a supreme practical principle, a principle which in relation to the human will is a categorical imperative, it must be an *objective* principle of the will, and must be able to serve as a universal practical law. For, such a principle must be derived from the idea of that which is necessarily an end for every one because it is an *end in itself*. Its foundation is this, that *rational nature exists as an end in itself*. Man necessarily conceives of his own existence in this way, and so far this is a *subjective* principle of human action. But in this way also every other rational being conceives of his own existence, and for the very same reason; hence the principle is also *objective*, and from it, as the highest practical ground, all laws of the will must be capable of being derived. The practical imperative will therefore be this: *Act so as to use humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of another, always as an end, never as merely a means.*

The principle, that humanity and every rational nature is an end in itself, is not borrowed from experience. For, in the first place, because of its universality it applies to all rational beings, and no experience can apply so widely. In the second place, it does not regard humanity subjectively, as an end of man, that is, as an object which the subject of himself actually makes his end, but as an objective end, which ought to be regarded as a law that constitutes the supreme limiting condition of all subjective ends, and which must therefore have its source in pure reason. The objective ground of all practical laws consists in the *rule* and the form of universality, which makes them capable of serv-

ing as laws, but their *subjective* ground consists in the *end* to which they are directed. Now, by the second principle, every rational being, as an end in himself, is the subject of all ends. From this follows the third practical principle of the will, which is the supreme condition of its harmony with universal practical reason, namely, the idea of *the will of every rational being as a will which lays down universal laws of action.*

This formula implies, that a will which is itself the supreme lawgiver cannot possibly act from interest of any sort in the law, although no doubt a will may stand under the law, and may yet be attached to it by the bond of interest.

At the point we have now reached, it does not seem surprising that all previous attempts to find out the principle of morality should have ended in failure. It was seen that man is bound under law by duty, but it did not strike any one, that the *universal* system of laws to which he is subject are laws which he *imposes upon himself*, and that he is only under obligation to act in conformity with his own will, a will which by the purpose of nature prescribes universal laws. Now so long as man is thought to be merely subject to law, no matter what the law may be, he must be regarded as stimulated or constrained to obey the law from interest of some kind; for as the law does not proceed from *his own* will, there must be *something external* to his will which compels him to act in conformity with it. This perfectly necessary conclusion frustrated every attempt to find a supreme principle of duty. Duty was never established, but merely the necessity of acting from some form of interest, private or public. The imperative was therefore necessarily always conditioned, and could not possibly have the force of a moral command. The supreme principle of morality I shall therefore call the principle of the *autonomy* of the will, to distinguish it from all other principles, which I call principles of *heteronomy.*

The conception that every rational being in all the maxims of his will must regard himself as prescribing universal laws, by reference to which himself and all his actions are to be judged, leads to a cognate and very fruitful conception, that of a *kingdom of ends.*

By *kingdom*, I mean the systematic combination of different rational beings through the medium of common laws. Now, laws determine certain ends as universal, and hence, if abstraction is made from the individual differences of rational beings, and from all that is peculiar to their private ends, we get the idea of a complete totality of ends combined in a system; in other words, we are able to conceive of a kingdom of ends, which conforms to the principles formulated above.

All rational beings stand under the law, that each should treat himself and others, *never simply as means*, but always as *at the same time ends in themselves*. Thus there arises a systematic combination of rational beings through the medium of common objective laws. This may well be called a kingdom of ends, because the object of those laws is just to relate all rational beings to one another as ends and means. Of course this kingdom of ends is merely an ideal.

Morality, then, consists in the relation of all action to the system of laws which alone makes possible a kingdom of ends. These laws must belong to the nature of every rational being, and must proceed from his own will. The principle of the will, therefore, is, that no action should be done from any other maxim than one which is consistent with a universal law. This may be expressed in the formula: *Act so that the will may regard itself as in its maxims laying down universal laws*. Now, if the maxims of rational beings are not by their very nature in harmony with this objective principle, the principle of a universal system of laws, the necessity of acting in conformity with that principle is called practical obligation or *duty*. No doubt duty does not apply to the sovereign will in the kingdom of ends, but it applies to every member of it, and to all in equal measure. *Autonomy* is thus the foundation of the moral value of man and of every other rational being.

The three ways in which the principle of morality has been formulated are at bottom simply different statements of the same law, and each implies the other two.

An absolutely good will, then, the principle of which must be a categorical imperative, will be undetermined as regards all

objects, and will contain merely the *form of volition* in general, a form which rests upon the *autonomy* of the will. The one law which the will of every rational being imposes upon itself, and imposes without reference to any natural impulse or any interest, is, that the maxims of every good will must be capable of being made a universal law.

How *such an a priori synthetic practical proposition is possible*, and why it is necessary, is a problem which it is not the task of a metaphysic of morality to solve. We have not even affirmed it to be true, much less have we attempted to prove its truth. To prove that practical reason is capable of being employed synthetically, and that morality is not a mere fiction of the brain, requires us to enter upon a criticism of the faculty of practical reason itself. In the next section we shall state the main points which must be proved in a Critique of Practical Reason, so far as is necessary for our present purpose.

SECTION III. TRANSITION FROM THE METAPHYSIC OF MORALITY TO THE CRITIQUE OF PRACTICAL REASON

The Idea of Freedom as the Key to the Autonomy of the Will

The *will* is the causality of living beings in so far as they are rational. *Freedom* is that causality in so far as it can be regarded as efficient without being *determined* to activity by any cause other than itself. Natural *necessity* is the property of all non-rational beings to be determined to activity by some cause external to themselves.

The definition of freedom just given is *negative*, and therefore it does not tell us what freedom is in itself; but it prepares the way for a *positive* conception of a more specific and more fruitful character. The conception of causality carries with it the conception of determination by law (*Gesetz*), for the effect is conceived as determined (*gesetzt*) by the cause. Hence freedom must not be regarded as lawless (*gesetzlos*), but simply as independent of

laws of nature. A free cause does conform to unchangeable laws, but these laws are peculiar to itself; and, indeed, apart from law a free will has no meaning whatever. A necessary law of nature, as we have seen, implies the heteronomy of efficient causes; for no effect is possible at all, unless its cause is itself determined to activity by something else. What, therefore, can freedom possibly be but autonomy, that is, the property of the will to be a law to itself? Now, to say that the will in all its actions is a law to itself, is simply to say that its principle is, to act from no other maxim than that the object of which is itself as a universal law. But this is just the formula of the categorical imperative and the principle of morality. Hence a free will is the same thing as a will that conforms to moral laws.

If, then, we start from the presupposition of freedom of the will, we can derive morality and the principle of morality simply from an analysis of the conception of freedom. Yet the principle of morality, namely, that an absolutely good will is a will the maxim of which can always be taken as itself a universal law, is a synthetic proposition. For by no possibility can we derive this property of the maxim from an analysis of the conception of an absolutely good will. The transition from the conception of freedom to the conception of morality can be made only if there is a third proposition which connects the other two in a synthetic unity. The *positive* conception of freedom yields this third proposition, and not the conception of nature, in which a thing is related causally only to something else.

Freedom is a Property of all Rational Beings

It cannot in any way be proved that the will of man is free, unless it can be shown that the will of all rational beings is free. For morality is a law for us only in so far as we are rational beings, and therefore it must apply to all rational beings. But morality is possible only for a free being, and hence it must be proved that freedom also belongs to the will of all rational beings. Now I say that a being who cannot act *except under the idea of freedom*, must for that very reason be regarded as free so far as his actions

are concerned. In other words, even if it cannot be proved by speculative reason that his will is free, all the laws that are inseparably bound up with freedom must be viewed by him as laws of his will. And I say, further, that we must necessarily attribute to every rational being that has a will the idea of freedom, because every such being always acts under that idea. A rational being we must conceive as having a reason that is practical, that is, a reason that has causality with regard to its objects. Now, it is impossible to conceive of a reason which should be consciously biassed in its judgments by some influence from without, for the subject would in that case regard its judgments as determined, not by reason, but by a natural impulse. Reason must therefore regard itself as the author of its principles of action, and as independent of all external influences. Hence, as practical reason, or as the will of a rational being, it must be regarded by itself as free. The will of a rational being, in other words, can be his own will only if he acts under the idea of freedom, and therefore this idea must in the practical sphere be ascribed to all rational beings.

The Interest connected with Moral Ideas

We have at last succeeded in reducing the true conception of morality to the idea of freedom. This, however, does not prove that man actually is free, but only that, without presupposing freedom, we cannot conceive of ourselves as rational beings, who are conscious of causality with respect to our actions, that is, as endowed with will. We have also found that on the same ground all beings endowed with reason and will must determine themselves to action under the idea of their freedom.

From the presupposition of the idea of freedom there also followed the consciousness of a law of action, the law that our subjective principles of action, or maxims, must always be of such a character that they have the validity of objective or universal principles, and can be taken as universal laws imposed upon our will by ourselves. But why, it may be asked, should I subject myself to this principle simply as a rational being, and

why, therefore, should all other beings who are endowed with reason come under the same principle? Admitting that I am not *forced* to do so by interest — which indeed would make a categorical imperative impossible — yet I must *take* an interest in that principle and see how I come to subject myself to it.

It looks as if we had, strictly speaking, shown merely that in the idea of freedom the moral law must be presupposed in order to explain the principle of the autonomy of the will, without being able to prove the reality and objectivity of the moral law itself.

It must be frankly admitted, that there is here a sort of circle from which it seems impossible to escape. We assume that as efficient causes we are free, in order to explain how in the kingdom of ends we can be under moral laws; and then we think of ourselves as subject to moral laws, because we have ascribed to ourselves freedom of will. Freedom of will and self-legislation of will are both autonomy, and, therefore, they are conceptions which imply each other; but, for that very reason, the one cannot be employed to explain or to account for the other.

How is a Categorical Imperative possible?

As an intelligence, a rational being views himself as a member of the intelligible world, and it is only as an efficient cause belonging to this world that he speaks of his own causality as *will.* On the other hand, he is conscious of himself as also a part of the world of sense, and in this connection his actions appear as mere phenomena which that causality underlies. Yet he cannot trace back his actions as phenomena to the causality of his will, because of that causality he has no knowledge; and he is thus forced to view them as if they were determined merely by other phenomena, that is, by natural desires and inclinations. Were a man a member only of the intelligible world, all his actions would be in perfect agreement with the autonomy of the will; were he merely a part of the world of sense, they would have to be regarded as completely subject to the natural law of desire and inclination, and to the heteronomy of nature. The former would rest upon the supreme principle of morality, the latter upon that

of happiness. But it must be observed that the intelligible world is *the condition of the world of sense*, and, therefore, of the laws of that world. And as the will belongs altogether to the intelligible world, it is the intelligible world that prescribes the laws which the will directly obeys. As an intelligence, I am therefore subject to the law of the intelligible world, that is, to reason, notwithstanding the fact that I belong on the other side of my nature to the world of sense. Now, as subject to reason, which in the idea of freedom contains the law of the intelligible world, I am conscious of being subject to the autonomy of the will. The laws of the intelligible world I must therefore regard as imperatives, and the actions conformable to this principle as duties.

The explanation of the possibility of categorical imperatives, then, is, that the idea of freedom makes me a member of the intelligible world. Were I a member of no other world, all my actions *would* as a matter of fact always conform to the autonomy of the will. But as I perceive myself to be also a member of the world of sense, I can say only, that my actions *ought* to conform to the autonomy of the will. The categorical *ought* is thus an *a priori* synthetic proposition. To my will as affected by sensuous desires, there is added synthetically the idea of my will as belonging to the intelligible world, and therefore as pure and self-determining. The will as rational is therefore the supreme condition of the will as sensuous. The method of explanation here employed is similar to that by which the categories were deduced. For the *a priori* synthetic propositions, which make all knowledge of nature possible, depend, as we have seen, upon the addition to perceptions of sense of the pure conceptions of understanding, which, in themselves, are nothing but the form of law in general.

Limits of Practical Philosophy

Freedom is only an *idea* of reason, and therefore its objective reality is doubtful. Thus there arises a dialectic of practical reason. The freedom ascribed to the will seems to stand in contradiction with the necessity of nature. It is, therefore, incumbent upon *speculative philosophy* at least to show that we think

of man in one sense and relation when we call him free, and in another sense and relation when we view him as a part of nature, and as subject to its laws. But this duty is incumbent upon speculative philosophy only in so far as it has to clear the way for practical philosophy.

In *thinking* itself into the intelligible world, practical reason does not transcend its proper limits, as it would do if it tried to know itself directly by means of perception. In so thinking itself, reason merely conceives of itself negatively as *not* belonging to the world of sense, without giving any laws to itself in determination of the will. There is but a single point in which it is positive, namely, in the thought that freedom, though it is a negative determination, is yet bound up with a positive faculty, and, indeed, with a causality of reason which is called will. In other words, will is the faculty of so acting that the principle of action should conform to the essential nature of a rational motive, that is, to the condition that the maxim of action should have the universal validity of a law. Were reason, however, to derive an *object of will*, that is, a motive, from the intelligible world, it would transcend its proper limits, and would make a pretence of knowing something of which it knew nothing. The conception of an intelligible world is therefore merely a *point of view* beyond the world of sense, at which reason sees itself compelled to take its stand *in order to think itself as practical.* This conception would not be possible at all if the sensuous desires were sufficient to determine the action of man. It is necessary, because otherwise man would not be conscious of himself as an intelligence, and, therefore, not as a rational cause acting through reason or operating freely. This thought undoubtedly involves the idea of an order and a system of laws other than the order and laws of nature, which concern only the world of sense. Hence it makes necessary the conception of an intelligible world, a world which comprehends the totality of rational beings as things in themselves. Yet it in no way entitles us to think of that world otherwise than in its *formal* condition, that is, to conceive of the maxims of the will as conformable to universal laws.

Reason would, therefore, completely transcend its proper limits

if it should undertake to *explain how* pure reason can be practical, or, what is the same thing, to explain *how* freedom is possible.

We can explain nothing but that which we can reduce to laws, the object of which can be presented in a possible experience. Freedom, however, is a mere idea, the objective reality of which can in no way be presented in accordance with laws of nature, and, therefore, not in any possible experience. It has merely the necessity of a presupposition of reason, made by a being who believes himself to be conscious of a will, that is, of a faculty distinct from mere desire. The most that we can do is to *defend* freedom by removing the objections of those who claim to have a deeper insight into the nature of things than we can pretend to have, and who, therefore, declare that freedom is impossible. It would no doubt be a contradiction to say that in its causality the will is entirely separated from all the laws of the sensible world. But the contradiction disappears, if we say, that behind phenomena there are things in themselves, which, though they are hidden from us, are the condition of phenomena; and that the laws of action of things in themselves naturally are not the same as the laws under which their phenomenal manifestations stand.

While, therefore, it is true that we cannot comprehend the practical unconditioned necessity of the moral imperative, it is also true that we can comprehend its *incomprehensibility;* and this is all that can fairly be demanded of a philosophy which seeks to reach the principles which determine the limits of human reason.

JOHANN GOTTLIEB FICHTE

(1762–1814)

THE SCIENCE OF ETHICS

Translated from the German by*

A. E. KROEGER

DEDUCTION OF THE PRINCIPLE OF MORALITY

Preliminary

It is asserted that there manifests itself in the soul of man an impulsion to do certain things utterly independent of external purposes, merely for the sake of doing them; and, on the other hand, to leave undone other things equally independent of external purposes, and merely for the sake of leaving them undone. The condition of man, in so far as such an impulsion is necessarily to manifest itself within him, as sure as he is a rational being, is called his *moral nature*.

The power of *cognition*, which belongs to man, may relate in a twofold manner to this, his moral nature.

Firstly. When that impulsion is discovered by him in his self-observation as a fact — and it certainly is assumed that each rational being will thus discover it, if he but closely observes himself; man may simply accept it as such fact, may rest content to have discovered that it *is thus*, without inquiring *in what manner* and from *what grounds* it becomes thus. Perhaps he may even freely resolve, from inclination, to place unconditioned *faith* in the requirements of that impulsion, and actually to *think*, as his highest destination, what that impulsion represents to him as such; nay, perhaps even to *act* constantly in conformity with this faith. Thus there arises within him the *common*, or ordinary, knowledge, as well of his moral nature in general, as also — if he

* From J. G. Fichte's *Das System der Sittenlehre nach den Principien der Wissenschaftslehre*, Jena and Leipzig, 1798. Reprinted from J. G. Fichte's *The Science of Ethics as based on the Science of Knowledge*, London, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 1897.

carefully attends to the dictates of his conscience in the particular phases of his life — of his particular duties; which common knowledge is possible from the *standpoint of ordinary consciousness*, and is sufficient for the generation of moral sentiments and a moral behaviour.

Secondly. But man may also not rest content with the immediate perception; he may desire to know the grounds of what he has thus discovered; he may not be content with a partial, but desire a genetical knowledge; or he may desire to know not only that such an impulsion exists within him, but likewise how it arises within him. If he obtains this knowledge, it will be a *speculative* knowledge, and to attain it he must rise from the standpoint of ordinary consciousness to a higher standpoint.

Now, how is this problem to be solved, or how are the *grounds* of the moral nature of man to be discovered? The only matter which excludes all asking for a higher ground is this; that we are *we*, or, in other words, our Egoness, or Rationality, which latter word, however, is not nearly as expressively correct as the former. Everything else, whether it be with*in* us, like the impulsion above mentioned, or *for* us, like the external world which we assume, is only thus within or for us because we are it, as can indeed be easily proven in general, whereas the particular insight into the manner in which something connects within, or for us, that rationality, is precisely the speculative and scientific knowledge of the grounds of this something whereof we speak. The development of these grounds being deduced, as it is, from the highest and absolute principle of Egoness, and shown to be a necessary result thereof, is a deduction. It is therefore our present task to furnish a deduction of the moral nature or principle in man.

Instead of enumerating at length the advantages of such a deduction, it is sufficient to remark that only through it does a science of morality arise. And science — no matter whereof — is end in itself.

In relation to a scientific complete philosophy, the present science of morality is connected with the science of knowledge through the present deduction. This deduction is derived from

principles of the latter science, and shows how the particular science of morality proceeds from the general science of knowledge, and thus becomes a separate philosophical science.

If, as is maintained, the morality of our nature follows from our rationality, in accordance with necessary laws, the mentioned impulsion is itself primary and immediate for perception; that is to say, it will manifest itself without our interference, and we cannot change this, its manifestation, through our freedom in any manner whatsoever. In generating through a deduction an insight into the grounds thereof, we do not in any manner receive the power to change anything in it, since only our cognition, and not our power, extends so far, and since the whole relation is necessarily our own unchangeable nature itself.

Hence the deduction generates nothing else, and must not be expected to generate anything else than simply theoretical cognition. Just as we do not place things differently in time and space after we have obtained the insight into the grounds of our doing so at all, than we did previously, so also morality does not manifest itself differently in man before and after its deduction. Nor is the science of morality a science of *wisdom* — as, indeed, were impossible, since wisdom is rather an art than a science — but morality is like all philosophy — a science of knowledge. In its peculiar characteristic, however, it is the theory of the consciousness of our moral nature in general, and of our determined duties in particular.

CHAPTER I

PROBLEM. To think myself as self, that is to say, apart from all which is not myself.

A. SOLUTION. I find myself, as self, only as willing.

EXPLANATION

First. What does this mean: I find *myself?*

The easiest manner to guide any one to the correct thinking and understanding of the conception *I* is as follows: — Think, I would say to him, any object, for instance, this wall, this desk.

You doubtless assume a thinking, which thinks in this thought, and this thinking you are yourself. You are immediately conscious of your thinking in this, your thinking. But the object which you think is not to be the thinking itself, is not to be identical with it, but is to be an opposite somewhat, of which oppositeness you are also immediately conscious in this your thinking.

Now think again — not a wall, however, but yourself. As sure as you do this, you posit the thinking and the thought, not as opposites, as you did in the previous case, not as a twofold, but as one and the same; and you are immediately conscious of it in this manner. You therefore think the conception Ego or I, when the thinking and the thought are assumed in thinking as one and the same, and *vice versa*, whatever arises in such a thinking is the conception of the *Ego*.

Applying this to our case, I find myself would signify: I assume that which I find to be the same as that which finds; the finding and the found are to be the same.

Second. What does this mean: I *find* myself?

The found is here opposed to that which is produced through our free activity; and more particularly the finding is here determined as that which finds; *i. e.*, in so far as I find, I am conscious of no other activity than that of a mere taking hold of something; that which I take hold of being neither produced nor in any manner modified by my taking hold of it. It is to be, and to be precisely as it is, independently of my taking hold of it. It was without having been taken hold of, and would have remained as it was although I had not taken hold of it. My taking hold of it was altogether accidental for it, and did not change it in the least. Thus, at least, do I appear to myself in finding, and at present we are merely concerned in establishing the facts of consciousness, but not in showing how it may be in truth, *i. e.*, from the highest standpoint of speculation. In short, something is *given* to the perceiving subject; he is to be purely passive, and something is to force itself upon him, which, in our case, he is to recognize as himself.

Third. What does this signify: I find myself as *willing*, and can find myself *only as willing?*

What willing means is presupposed as well known. This conception is capable of no real explanation, nor does it need any. Each one must become conscious in himself, through intellectual contemplation, as to what it signifies, and will doubtless be able to do so without any difficulty. The fact which the above words suggest is as follows: — I become conscious of a willing. I add in thinking to this willing something which exists independently of my consciousness, and which I assert to be the willing subject in this will, or to be that which is to *have* this will, in which this will is to be. *How* we come to add such a substance in thinking, and what are the grounds of it, we do not discuss here. We merely assert here *that* it does occur, and of this each one must convince himself by self-observation. I become *conscious* of, or perceive, this will. But I also become conscious now of this consciousness, or of this perception, and relate it also to a substance; and this conscious substance is for me the same which has the will. Hence I find the willing subject to be myself, or I find *myself* willing.

I find myself *only* as willing. I have not an immediate perception of substance. Substance is, indeed, no object of perception at all, but is merely that which is added through thinking to an object of perception. I can immediately perceive only something, which is to be a manifestation of the substance. Now there are only two manifestations which can be immediately ascribed to that substance: *Thinking*, in the widest significance of the word, and *willing*. The former is originally and immediately for itself not at all an object of a special new consciousness, but is consciousness itself. Only in so far as it is related and opposed to another objective does itself become objective in *this opposition.* Hence, as original objective manifestation of that substance there remains only the latter, the *willing;* and this, indeed, remains always only *objective*, is never itself a thinking, but always only the thought manifestation of self-activity. In short, the manifestation which alone I originally ascribe to myself is the willing, and I become conscious of myself only on condition of becoming conscious of myself as a willing.

Proof

Having thus explained the above proposition, we now proceed to establish its proof. This proof is based:

First. *On the conception of the Ego.* — The significance of this conception has just been established through its genesis. That each one does truly proceed in the described manner when endeavouring to think his self; and that, on the other hand, such a proceeding gives rise to no other thought than that of his self; this each one must find in himself, and it cannot be specially proved to him.

Second. On the necessity of the *original oppositedness of an objective and a subjective in consciousness.* — In all thinking there is a thought which is not that thinking itself: in all consciousness there is something of which we are conscious, which is not that consciousness itself. The truth of this assertion each one also must find in the self-contemplation of his procedure, and it cannot be proven to him from conceptions. It is true that afterwards we become conscious of our thinking *as* such, *i. e.*, as a doing, and thereupon make it an object of our thinking; and the ease and natural tendency to do this is what constitutes philosophical genius, without which no one will grasp the significance of transcendental philosophy. But even this is only possible if we imperceptibly subsume under that thinking as merely thought, for only on this condition do we really think a thinking.

Third. *On the character of the original objective*, that it is to be something existing independently of thinking, hence something *actual* and in and through itself existing. This also each one must convince himself of through internal contemplation, for although this relation of the objective to the subjective is developed in a science of knowledge, it is by no means proven from its conception, nor can it be so proven, since the latter only becomes possible through that self-contemplation.

The proof may be stated thus: It is the character of the Ego, *that the acting and that which is acted upon be one and the same.* This is the case when the Ego is thought. Only in so far as the thought is the same as the thinking do I hold the thought to be

myself. But in the present case we are to have nothing to do with thinking. It is true that, since the thinking and the thought are one, I am myself the thinking; but our present proposition asserts that the *thought*, the *objective, is to be Ego simply by itself and independently of thinking*, and is to be recognized in this manner as Ego, for our proposition asserts that it *is found as Ego.*

Hence, in the thought as such, *i. e.*, in so far as it is to be merely the objective and never the subjective, there must be an identity of the acting and that which is acted upon; which, since the thought is to be merely an object, is an *actual* acting upon itself (not a mere contemplating of itself like the ideal activity), or in other words, *an actual self-determining of itself through itself.* But such an acting we call willing, and willing we only think as such an acting. Hence the proposition, to find *myself*, is absolutely identical with the proposition, to find myself willing. Only in so far as I find myself willing do I find *myself*, and in so far as I find myself I necessarily find myself *willing.*

Remark

It is clear that the proposition here proved, "When I find myself I necessarily find myself willing," in order to be productive of categorical results must be preceded by another one, to wit: "I necessarily find myself, become necessarily conscious of myself." This self-consciousness is proved, not as fact, for as such it is immediate, but in its connection with all other consciousness, and as reciprocally determining it in a fundamental science of knowledge; and hence our present proposition, together with all the results which may flow from it, will itself become a necessary result as well as a condition of self-consciousness. It may be said of this proposition, and these its future results, so certain as I am I, or as I am self-conscious, so certain does this or that necessarily exist in and for me. And thus it appears how our present science of morality is based on the common ground of all philosophy.

B. Solution Continued. But willing itself is thinkable only under the presupposition of a something distinct from the Ego.

Proof

It is true that in philosophical abstraction we may speak of a willing in general, which on that very account is undetermined; but all truly *perceivable* willing, such as we speak of here, is necessarily a determined willing, in which *something* is willed. To will something is to require that a determined object, which in the willing of it is only thought as *possible* — for if it were thought as *actual* the act would not be a willing, but a perceiving — shall become actual object of a perception. This requirement, therefore, clearly refers us to the external. Hence, all willing involves the postulate of an external object, and the conception of willing involves something which is not ourself.

But more than this. The possibility of postulating in the willing an external object presupposes already within us the conception of an externality in general, and this conception is only possible through experience. But this experience likewise is a relation of ourself to something outside of us. In other words, that which I will is never anything else than a modification of an object which is to be actually existing outside of me. All my willing is therefore conditioned by the perception of an external object, and in willing I do not perceive myself as I am in and for myself, but merely as I may become in a certain relation to external things.

C. Solution Concluded. Hence, in order to find my true essence, I must abstract from this foreign characteristic in willing. That which remains after this abstraction is my pure being.

Explanation

This proposition is the immediate result of the previous propositions. Hence, we have only to investigate what that is which remains after having undertaken the required abstraction. Willing, as such, is a first; is absolutely grounded in itself, and in nothing external whatsoever. Let us make clear this conception, upon which all depends here, and which can only be *negatively*

comprehended and explained — since a first signifies merely that which is derived from nothing else, and absolutely grounded in itself signifies merely not grounded in anything else.

Whatsoever is dependent, conditioned, or grounded through another may be cognized, in so far as it is thus, *mediately*, namely, from a cognition of that upon which it depends, or in which it is grounded. Thus, for instance, if a ball is set in motion, I can certainly have immediate perception of its movement, of the point from which it starts, the point where it rests, and the celerity with which it moves; but I could likewise obtain a knowledge of all this if I were merely made acquainted with the *conditions* under which the ball rests, and the force of the stroke with which it is set in motion, although I had no immediate perception of the motion whatever. Hence the motion of the ball is considered as something dependent, or conditioned — as not primary. An absolute first, and in itself grounded somewhat, must therefore be of such a character that it cannot be cognized mediately through another, but only immediately through itself. It is what it is because it is so.

In so far, therefore, as the willing is absolute and primary, it cannot be explained in any manner from something outside of the Ego, but only from the Ego itself. This *absoluteness* it is, therefore, which remains when we abstract from all foreign elements.

Remark

That willing, in the significance here attached to it, does *appear* as absolute is a fact of consciousness which each one will find in himself, and which cannot be externally proved to any one who has not this immediate knowledge of it as a fact. Nevertheless, it is quite possible that this appearance of it as absolute may be further explained and deduced, whereby the appearing absoluteness will itself be further explained and cease to be absoluteness, the appearance thereof changing into mere semblance. In a similar manner it also appears to us, as an immediate fact of consciousness, that certain things exist independently of us in time and space, and yet transcendental philosophy further explains and

deduces this appearance; although it does not change that appearance into a mere semblance, for reasons not here to be stated. It is true no one will be able to furnish such an explanation of willing. Nevertheless, if any one should say that willing has an external — and to us incomprehensible — ground, there can be no theoretical rational ground objected against the assertion, although it likewise can also prefer no ground in its favour. The truth is that when we resolve to consider this appearance as no further explicable, or, rather, as absolutely inexplicable — that is to say, as truth, and as our only truth, according to which all other truth must be judged and accepted; and upon this resolve our whole philosophy is erected. In that case, we make this resolve not from any theoretical insight, but in consequence of a practical interest. I *will* be independent: hence I resolve to consider myself independent. Such a resolve is called *Faith*. Hence our philosophy starts from a faith, and knows it. Dogmatism, which, logically carried out, makes the same assertion, starts also from a faith (in the thing in itself), but generally does not know it. In our philosophy each one makes himself the absolute starting-point, or basis, of his philosophy: hence our system appears as without a basis to all those who are incapable of doing so. But we can also assure all these, in advance, that they will never find a basis elsewhere, unless they are satisfied with this. It is necessary that our philosophy should say this openly, so that it may no longer be called upon to demonstrate externally to men what each one must create within himself.

How do we think this absoluteness in willing?

In order to assist the reader at the very beginning in obtaining some insight into this conception (which is probably, in the abstractness it has received here, the most difficult of all conceptions in philosophy, although it will doubtless receive the highest clearness in the progress of our present science, the whole object of which is merely to further determine this conception), we make use of an

Illustration

Let the reader imagine a steel spring, bent together. There is doubtless in the spring a tendency to repel the pressure, hence a tendency outwards. Such a spring is the picture of an actual willing, as the *state* or condition of a rational being; but of it I do not speak here. Let me now ask what is the first *ground* (not condition) of this tendency, as a real and determined manifestation of the spring? Doubtless an inner action of the spring upon itself, a self-determination. For no one surely will say that the outward force which presses the spring is the ground of the spring's reacting against it. This self-determining is the same as the mere *act* of willing in the rational being. Both together would produce in the spring, if it could contemplate itself, the consciousness of a will to repel the pressing force. But all these moments are possible only on condition that such an external pressure is actually exercised upon the spring. In the same way the rational being cannot determine itself to an actual willing, unless it stands in reciprocal relation with something external (for as such the rational being *appears* to itself).

But this is also to be abstracted from, and hence we do not speak here of this moment any more than of the first-mentioned one. Now if we abstract from the external pressure altogether, does there yet remain anything whereby we think the steel spring as such, and what is this remainder? Evidently that, by which I judge the steel spring to have a tendency to repel any outside pressure as soon as it occurs; hence the own inner tendency thereof to determine itself to react, or the real essence of elasticity as the final and no further explicable ground of all the appearances of the spring, whenever the conditions of its manifestation are given. (The very essential distinction between this original tendency in the steel spring, and the same in the rational being, will appear in the following investigations.)

In the same manner in which we removed all foreign elements from the conception of elasticity in the steel spring, we now proceed to remove all foreign elements in the Ego comprehended

through its willing, and thus to arrive at a comprehension of its pure absoluteness.

So far as the *form* of this problem is concerned, it is a problem to think the Ego in the required abstraction as a *permanent*, and hence that, through which it is to be comprehended and characterized in this thinking, must be an essential and permanent. Its manifestations and appearances can change, because the conditions under which it manifests itself change; but that which manifests itself under all these conditions remains always the same.

So far as the *content* of the problem is concerned, that which is to be thought is to be the ground of an absolute willing. (All willing is absolute.) What, then, is it? Each one must have truly thought, together with us, that which we required him to think; must have undertaken, together with us, the prescribed abstractions; and must now observe himself internally, and see what it is that remains, what it is that he still thinks, after having removed all those foreign elements. Only thus can the required knowledge be infused into him. A name cannot make it clear, for the whole conception has never been thought before, much less named. But to give it a name, we will call it, *absolute tendency to the absolute;* absolute undeterminability through anything not itself; tendency absolutely to determine itself without any external persuasion. It is not only a mere *power*, or *faculty*, for a faculty is not actual, but is merely that which we think in advance of our actuality, in order to be able to receive it in a *series* of our thinking; and that which we have to think here is to be something actual, is to be that which constitutes the essence of the Ego. And yet this conception of a faculty is also involved in it. When related to the actual manifestation, which is only possible on condition of a given object, it is in this relation the faculty or power of such manifestation. Neither is it an *impulse*, as one might call the ground of the elasticity in the steel spring; for an impulse operates necessarily when the conditions of its operating are given, and operates in a materially determined manner. But concerning the Ego, we know as yet nothing in relation to this point, and are not allowed to make hasty judgments in advance of the investigation.

Result

The essential character of the Ego, through which it distinguishes itself from all that is outside of it, consists in its tendency to self-activity for the sake of self-activity; and it is this tendency which is thought, when the Ego is thought in and for itself without relation to anything external.

Remark

It must be remembered that the Ego is here considered only *as object*, but not as *Ego in general.* In the latter case, our above result would be utterly false.

CHAPTER II

We have just shown what the Ego *is*, in and for itself; or, to express it more carefully, how the Ego must necessarily be *thought*, if it is thought solely as object.

But the *Ego* is something only in so far as it posits itself (contemplates and thinks itself) as such, and the Ego is nothing so far as it does not posit itself. This is a proposition taken from and proved in the science of knowledge, and which we need therefore only explain here in a few words.

A thing, and the utter opposite of a thing, the Ego, or a rational being, are distinguished by this, that the thing merely *is*, without knowing of its being in the least, whereas in the Ego, being and consciousness join together; the being of the Ego not being without self-consciousness of the Ego, and *vice versa*, no self-consciousness of the Ego without a being of that whereof it becomes conscious. All being relates to a consciousness, and even the existence of a *thing* cannot be thought without adding in thinking an intelligence which knows of this existence. But in the case of the thing this knowing is not posited in the thing, which is, but in an external intelligence; whereas the knowing of the being of the Ego is posited in the same substance, which *is;* and only in

so far as this immediate connection of consciousness and being is posited can it be said the Ego is this or that.

Applying this to the present case, it follows that the Ego must know of that which we have established as the essence of the Ego, as sure as that is its essence. Here there is necessarily a consciousness of the described absolute tendency. It may be of advantage, not merely to state this result generally, but to enter upon a particular description of this consciousness. We now proceed to undertake this task.

Problem. To become definitely conscious of the consciousness of our original being.

Explanatory

It is self-evident that we are conscious whereof we speak, whether we speak philosophically or otherwise. Thus in the preceding chapter we became conscious of something. The object of our consciousness was produced through free self-determination of our thinking faculty by means of an arbitrary abstraction.

But at present we assert that the same object exists for us *originally*, *i. e.*, independent of all philosophizing, and necessarily forces itself upon us as sure as we have any consciousness at all. If this is true, then an original consciousness thereof exists, though perhaps not precisely as of a single object, in the same abstraction in which we have just established it. Perhaps it may always occur in this original consciousness, in and together with another thought, as a determination of that thought.

Now let us ask — Is, then, this original consciousness differently constituted from that which we have just now produced in us through philosophizing? How were this possible, since the same is to be its object, and since the philosopher has surely no other subjective form of thinking than the common and original form of thinking of universal reason?

Why, then, do we seek what we already possess? We have it without knowing it; and at present we only want to produce this

knowing of it within us. The rational being is constituted in such a manner as rarely to observe its own thinking when thinking, but only the object of its thinking; or as usually to lose itself, the subject, in the object. Nevertheless, philosophy is, above all, anxious to know the subject as such in order to obtain a judgment concerning its influence upon the determination of the object. This can only be done if the mere reflection is made the object of a new reflection.

To the non-philosopher it may seem curious and, perhaps, ridiculous to require any one to become conscious of a consciousness; but this would only prove his ignorance of philosophy and his inability to philosophize.

Genetical Description of the Consciousness of our Original Being

The Ego has the absolute power of contemplation, for only through it is it Ego. This power can be no further deduced, and needs no further deduction. With the positing of an Ego this power is posited.

Again, the Ego can and must contemplate what it is. The peculiar determination of contemplation, here postulated, requires likewise no deduction or mediation through external grounds. The Ego contemplates itself because it does, so far as regards the mere fact.

Now let us proceed to determine this fact; in doing which we shall and must calculate in each reader upon his own self-active generation of that whereof we speak, and upon his close observation of that which will arise within him when he thus generates.

A. The contemplating intelligence posits the above described tendency to absolute activity as *itself*, or as identical with itself, the intelligence that absoluteness of real activity thus becomes the true essence of the intelligence, and is brought under the authority of the conception, whereby alone it first becomes true *freedom:* absoluteness of the absoluteness, absolute power to make itself absolute. Through the consciousness of its absoluteness

the Ego tears itself loose from itself, and posits itself as independent.

Explanatory

Let me explain this expression: it tears itself loose from itself. All contemplation, as such, is to be directed upon something existing independently of it, and existing precisely as it is contemplated. It is the same with the contemplation whereof we speak here. The Ego as absolute is to have had existence before it was seized in contemplation, and this absoluteness is to constitute its independent being, apart from all contemplation of it. Now, where the contemplated issomething outside of the contemplating, the intelligence is altogether passive in its observation. Such is not to be the case in our instance. Here the contemplated is itself the contemplating; not immediately as such, it is true, but it is the same one essence, power, and substance, as the contemplating. Hence the intelligence is in this instance not merely a passive observer, but rather *becomes* for itself absolute real power of the conception. The Ego, as absolute power with consciousness, tears itself loose from the Ego, as the *given* absolute without power and consciousness.

It is well to dwell somewhat longer upon this chief thought, which may seem difficult to many, but upon the direct comprehension whereof the possibility of understanding our whole system depends.

Let the reader once more think of an elastic steel spring. It is true that the spring contains within itself the principle of a peculiar movement, which is not given to the spring externally, but which rather resists the direction given it from without. Nevertheless you will doubtless hesitate to ascribe that which you have hitherto very properly called *freedom* to the spring. Whence this hesitation? If you should say, "Because the resistance follows from the nature of the spring, and from the circumstance of an external pressure upon it with inevitable necessity," I am willing to remove this inevitable necessity. I will permit you to assume that the steel spring, at some time, resists the pressure from an unknown reason, and at another time from an unknown reason

cedes to the pressure. Are you now going to call such a steel spring free? I do not believe it. The conception of freedom, instead of facilitating the connection of freedom with the spring, rather asks you to think something absolutely unthinkable, namely, blind chance; and you will persist in saying that although you do not know through what the spring is determined to resist, you are sure that the spring is thus determined, and does not *determine itself* to resist, and that the spring can, therefore, not be called free.

Now, let me ask you, what do you think when you think "to be determined" in opposition to "self-determined," and what is it you require for the possibility of the latter? We will try to make this clear; and since you found it impossible to do anything with the thought of a free thing as a thing dependent upon blind chance, nor found that thought to facilitate the connection of freedom with a thing, we shall commence with it. You said, then, the steel spring is *determined by its nature* to resist external pressure. What does this mean? In thus asking, What does it mean? I do not propose that you shall acquire an external knowledge, or discover new results by progressive conclusions from an acquired knowledge. That which I ask for, you think at this very moment, and you have always thought it, even before you resolved to philosophize; and I merely ask that you shall make clear to yourself what you really think, or that you shall but understand what you say. The nature of the thing is its fixed being, without internal movement, quiet and dead; and such a fixed being you posit necessarily when you posit a thing and a nature thereof, for such a positing is precisely the thinking of a thing. Now, together with this unchangeable permanency of the thing, you posit that under a certain condition a change will result in the thing. For that which you have posited as *fixed* and *unchangeable* is the nature of the thing, which does not depend upon the thing, since the thing is itself its own nature, and its nature is the thing itself. When you think the one, you necessarily think the other also, and you will surely not say that the thing exists in advance of its own nature, and determines its own nature. But having once posited this nature of the thing, you proceed in your

thinking from a being (of the nature of the thing) to another being (of the manifestation of this nature under certain conditions), and this progression of your thinking describes a steady series of being. Expressing the same subjectively, your contemplation is always tied down, is always merely passively observing, and there is not a moment in the series when it might become self-productive; and this condition of your thinking is precisely that which you call the thinking of *necessity*, and through which you deny all freedom to the object of such thinking.

We have, therefore, discovered the ground why you find it absolutely impossible to think freedom in our present case, and in all similar cases. Expressing it objectively, all being which flows itself from a being is a necessary being, and not a product of freedom. Expressing it subjectively, the conception of a necessary being arises in us through the connecting of one being with another being.

From this you will now be able to conclude, through opposition, what it is you require in order to think freedom, which you surely can think, and always have thought.

You require a being which shall have, not no ground at all — for such you cannot think — but a ground in something which is not again a being. Now, besides being, we only have thinking. Hence, a being which you may be able to think as product of freedom must proceed from a thinking. Let us see whether this presupposition makes freedom comprehensible.

Something which is not determined, but determines itself, is to be called force. Is this active determining comprehensible when presupposed as occurring through a *thinking?* Undoubtedly, provided we are but able to think thinking itself, and do not again make a thing out of our conception. The reason why we could not derive freedom from a being was because the conception of a being involved that of a fixed permanency. But such permanent being does not hinder us when we derive freedom from thinking, since thinking is not posited as something permanent, remaining, etc., but as agility [*agilita* = producing activity], and only as agility, of the intelligence.

To be posited as free, something must be posited as determin-

ing *itself*. Such was your assertion. (It must not only be not determined through an external other, but also not through its own nature.) What does that *Itself* mean? It doubtless involves the thought of a twofold. The free is to *be* before it *is determined;* it is to have an existence independent of its determinedness. A thing cannot be thought as determining itself precisely because it has not being in advance of its nature, or of the system of its determinedness. But the intelligence, with its conception of real being, is in advance of that real being, and the former contains the ground of the latter. The conception of a certain being precedes that being, and the latter is dependent upon the former.

Our assertion is, therefore, that only the *intelligence* can be thought as *free*, and that the intelligence becomes free only through thus seizing itself as intelligence, for only thus does it subsume its being under something which is higher than all being, namely, the conception. Somebody might object that in our own argumentation (in the preceding chapter) the absoluteness is presupposed as a being; and that the reflection which is now to achieve such great wonders is evidently itself conditioned through that absoluteness, having it for its object, and is neither reflection in general nor this particular reflection, unless an object in general and this particular object are presupposed. To this objection we reply that it will appear hereafter how this absoluteness itself is required for, and results from, the possibility of an intelligence in general, and that hence the above proposition may also be reversed as follows: only that which is free can be thought as an intelligence; an intelligence is necessarily free.

B. The Ego, in contemplating that tendency to absolute activity as itself, posits itself as free, *i. e.*, as a power to have causality through the mere conception.

Explanatory

Freedom is, according to Kant, the power to absolutely begin a condition or being. This is an excellent nominal explanation; and yet it seems to have been of little value in effecting a better insight

into freedom. For that explanation did not answer the higher question: *how* a condition or being could have an absolute beginning, or how such an absolute beginning could be thought; by which answer a genetical conception of freedom would have been generated before our very eyes. Now this we have just done. The absolutely beginning condition is not connected with nothingness — for the finite rational being necessarily thinks through mediation and connection. But it begins with *thinking* itself — not with a being but with thinking.

In order to establish the conception in this manner, it is certainly necessary to walk, and to be able to walk, the path of the science of knowledge, to be able to abstract from all being, as such (or from the fact), and to start from that which is higher than all being, from contemplating and thinking, or from the acting of the intelligence in general. The same path, which alone leads to the right end in the theoretical philosophy in explaining being, is the path which also alone makes practical philosophy possible. This likewise makes more clear our previous expression: "The Ego posits itself as independent." The first view of this proposition, namely, "The Ego gathers up all it originally is — and originally it is nothing unless free — in the contemplation and conception of itself," we have already explained completely. But that proposition involves something more. For all that the Ego can be in *actuality*, when the conception becomes cognition, and when the intelligence is the mere passive observer of the external world, originally depends, after all, upon the conception. Whatsoever the Ego is to become, the Ego must first make itself to be through the conception, and whatsoever the Ego will be in the future, it most surely will have made itself through the conception. Hence the Ego is its own ground in every respect, and absolutely *posits itself even in a practical significance.*

But the Ego only posits itself as a faculty or power.

This must, and can, be strictly proven. For the tendency to have absolute activity comes under the authority of the intelligence, as we have seen. But the intelligence, as such, is — as each one must discover in contemplating himself as intelligence, and as cannot be demonstrated to anybody — absolutely determining

itself a mere *pure activity*, in opposition to all *permanent* and *posited being*, however finely conceived; hence it is capable of no determination through its nature or essence, or through a tendency, impulse, or inclination in it. Hence also such an inclination, however finely conceived, is not possible in that power of activity which is under the control of the intelligence, in so far as it is under such control; which active power is therefore to be thought as a mere pure *faculty*, *i. e.*, as merely a conception, to which an actuality can, in thinking, be connected as to its ground, although there is not in it the least datum to show *what sort of an* actuality it will be.

GEORG WILHELM FRIEDRICH HEGEL

(1770–1831)

PHILOSOPHY OF RIGHT

Translated from the German by*

S. W. DYDE

INTRODUCTION

1. The philosophic science of right has as its object the idea of right, *i. e.*, the conception of right and the realization of the conception.

Note. — Philosophy has to do with ideas or realized thoughts, and hence not with what we have been accustomed to call mere conceptions. It has indeed to exhibit the onesidedness and untruth of these mere conceptions, and to show that, while that which commonly bears the name "conception," is only an abstract product of the understanding, the true conception alone has reality and gives this reality to itself. Everything, other than the reality which is established by the conception, is transient surface existence, external accident, opinion, appearance void of essence, untruth, delusion, and so forth. Through the actual shape, which it takes upon itself in actuality, is the conception itself understood. This shape is the other essential element of the idea, and is to be distinguished from the form, which exists only as conception.

Addition. — The conception and its existence are two sides, distinct yet united, like soul and body. The body is the same life as the soul, and yet the two can be named independently. Soul without a body would not be a living thing, and *vice versa*. Thus the visible existence of the conception is its body, just as the body obeys the soul which produced it. Seeds contain the tree and its

* From G. W. F. Hegel's *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts*, Berlin, 1820. Reprinted from Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*, trans. by S. W. Dyde, London, G. Bell & Sons, 1896.

whole power, though they are not the tree itself; the tree corresponds accurately to the simple structure of the seed. If the body does not correspond to the soul, it is defective. The unity of visible existence and conception, of body and soul, is the idea. It is not a mere harmony of the two, but their complete interpenetration. There lives nothing, which is not in some way idea. The idea of right is freedom, which, if it is to be apprehended truly, must be known both in its conception and in the embodiment of the conception.

2. The science of right is a part of philosophy. Hence it must develop the idea, which is the reason of an object, out of the conception. It is the same thing to say that it must regard the peculiar internal development of the thing itself. Since it is a part, it has a definite beginning, which is the result and truth of what goes before, and this, that goes before, constitutes its so-called proof. Hence the origin of the conception of right falls outside of the science of right. The deduction of the conception is presupposed in this treatise, and is to be considered as already given.

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4. The territory of right is in general the spiritual, and its more definite place and origin is the will, which is free. Thus freedom constitutes the substance and essential character of the will, and the system of right is the kingdom of actualized freedom. It is the world of spirit, which is produced out of itself, and is a second nature.

Addition. — Freedom of will is best explained by reference to physical nature. Freedom is a fundamental phase of will, as weight is of bodies. When it is said that matter is heavy, it might be meant that the predicate is an accident; but such is not the case, for in matter there is nothing which has not weight; in fact, matter is weight. That which is heavy constitutes the body, and is the body. Just so is it with freedom and the will; that which is free is the will. Will without freedom is an empty word, and freedom becomes actual only as will, as subject. A remark may also be made as to the connection of willing and thinking. Spirit, in general, is thought, and by thought man is distinguished from the animal. But we must not imagine that man is on one side think-

ing and on another side willing, as though he had will in one pocket and thought in another. Such an idea is vain. The distinction between thought and will is only that between a theoretical and a practical relation. They are not two separate faculties. The will is a special way of thinking; it is thought translating itself into reality; it is the impulse of thought to give itself reality. The distinction between thought and will may be expressed in this way. When I think an object, I make of it a thought, and take from it the sensible. Thus I make of it something which is essentially and directly mine. Only in thought am I self-contained. Conception is the penetration of the object, which is then no longer opposed to me. From it I have taken its own peculiar nature, which it had as an independent object in opposition to me. As Adam said to Eve, "Thou art flesh of my flesh and bone of my bone," so says the spirit, "This object is spirit of my spirit, and all alienation has disappeared." Any idea is a universalizing, and this process belongs to thinking. To make something universal is to think. The "I" is thought and the universal. When I say "I," I let fall all particularity of character, natural endowment, knowledge, age. The I is empty, a point and simple, but in its simplicity active. The gaily coloured world is before me; I stand opposed to it, and in this relation I cancel and transcend the opposition, and make the content my own. The I is at home in the world, when it knows it, and still more when it has conceived it.

So much for the theoretical relation. The practical, on the other hand, begins with thinking, with the I itself. It thus appears first of all as placed in opposition, because it exhibits, as it were, a separation. As I am practical, I am active; I act and determine myself; and to determine myself means to set up a distinction. But these distinctions are again mine, my own determinations come to me; and the ends are mine, to which I am impelled. Even when I let these distinctions and determinations go, setting them in the so-called external world, they remain mine. They are that which I have done and made, and bear the trace of my spirit. That is the distinction to be drawn between the theoretical and the practical relations.

And now the connection of the two must be also stated. The

theoretical is essentially contained in the practical. Against the idea that the two are separate runs the fact that man has no will without intelligence. The will holds within itself the theoretical, the will determines itself, and this determination is in the first instance internal. That which I will I place before my mind, and it is an object for me. The animal acts according to instinct, is impelled by something internal, and so is also practical. But it has no will, because it cannot place before its mind what it desires. Similarly man cannot use his theoretic faculty or think without will, for in thinking we are active. The content of what is thought receives, indeed, the form of something existing, but this existence is occasioned by our activity and by it established. These distinctions of theoretical and practical are inseparable; they are one and the same; and in every activity, whether of thought or will, both these elements are found.

5. The will contains (*a*) the element of pure indeterminateness, *i. e.*, the pure doubling of the I back in thought upon itself. In this process every limit or content, present though it be directly by way of nature, as in want, appetite, or impulse, or given in any specific way, is dissolved. Thus we have the limitless infinitude of absolute abstraction, or universality, the pure thought of itself.

Note. — Those who treat thinking and willing as two special, peculiar, and separate faculties, and, further, look upon thought as detrimental to the will, especially the good will, show from the very start that they know nothing of the nature of willing — a remark which we shall be called upon to make a number of times upon the same attitude of mind. — The will on one side is the possibility of abstraction from every aspect in which the I finds itself or has set itself up. It reckons any content as a limit, and flees from it. This is one of the forms of the self-direction of the will, and is by imaginative thinking insisted upon as of itself freedom. It is the negative side of the will, or freedom as apprehended by the understanding. This freedom is that of the void, which has taken actual shape, and is stirred to passion. It intends, indeed, to bring to pass some positive social condition, such as universal equality or universal religious life. But in fact it does not will the positive reality of any such condition, since

that would carry in its train a system, and introduce a separation by way of institutions and between individuals. But classification and objective system attain self-consciousness only by destroying negative freedom. Negative freedom is actuated by a mere solitary abstract idea, whose realization is nothing but the fury of desolation.

Addition. — This phase of will implies that I break loose from everything, give up all ends, and bury myself in abstraction. It is man alone who can let go everything, even life. He can commit suicide, an act impossible for the animal, which always remains only negative, abiding in a state foreign to itself, to which it must merely get accustomed. Man is pure thought of himself, and only in thinking has he the power to give himself universality, and to extinguish in himself all that is particular and definite. Negative freedom, or freedom of the understanding, is one-sided, yet as this one-sidedness contains an essential feature, it is not to be discarded. But the defect of the understanding is that it exalts its one-sidedness to the sole and highest place. This form of freedom frequently occurs in history. By the Hindus, *e. g.*, the highest freedom is declared to be persistence in the consciousness of one's simple identity with himself, to abide in the empty space of one's own inner being, like the colourless light of pure intuition, and to renounce every activity of life, every purpose and every idea. In this way man becomes Brahma; there is no longer any distinction between finite man and Brahma, every difference having been swallowed up in this universality. A more concrete manifestation of this freedom is the fanaticism of political and religious life. Of this nature was the terrible epoch of the French Revolution, by which all distinctions in talent and authority were to have been superseded. In this time of upheaval and commotion any specific thing was intolerable. Fanaticism wills an abstraction and not an articulate association. It finds all distinctions antagonistic to its indefiniteness, and supersedes them. Hence in the French Revolution the people abolished the institutions which they themselves had set up, since every institution is inimical to the abstract self-consciousness of equality.

6. (*β*) The I is also the transition from blank indefiniteness to

the distinct and definite establishment of a definite content and object, whether this content be given by nature or produced out of the conception of spirit. Through this establishment of itself as a definite thing the I becomes a reality. This is the absolute element of the finitude or specialization of the I.

Note. — This second element in the characterization of the I is just as negative as the first, since it annuls and replaces the first abstract negativity. As the particular is contained in the universal, so this second phase is contained already in the first, and is only an establishing of what the first is implicitly. The first phase, if taken independently, is not the true infinitude, *i. e.*, the concrete universal, or the conception, but limited and one sided. In that it is the abstraction from all definite character, it has a definite character. Its abstract and one-sided nature constitutes its definite character, its defect and finitude.

The distinct characterization of these two phases of the I is found in the philosophy of Fichte as also in that of Kant. Only, in the exposition of Fichte the I, when taken as unlimited, as it is in the first proposition of his "Wissenschaftslehre," is merely positive. It is the universality and identity made by the understanding. Hence this abstract I is in its independence to be taken as the truth, to which by way of mere addition comes in the second proposition, the limitation, or the negative in general, whether it be in the form of a given external limit or of an activity of the I. To apprehend the negative as immanent in the universal or self-identical, and also as in the I, was the next step, which speculative philosophy had to make. Of this want they have no presentiment, who like Fichte never apprehend that the infinite and finite are, if separated, abstract, and must be seen as immanent one in the other.

Addition. — This second element makes its appearance as the opposite of the first; it is to be understood in its general form: it belongs to freedom, but does not constitute the whole of it. Here the I passes over from blank indeterminateness to the distinct establishment of a specific character as a content or object. I do not will merely, but I will something. Such a will, as is analyzed in the preceding paragraph, wills only the abstract universal, and therefore wills nothing. Hence it is not a will. The particular

thing which the will wills is a limitation, since the will, in order to be a will, must in general limit itself. Limit or negation consists in the will willing something. Particularizing is thus as a rule named finitude. Ordinary reflection holds the first element, that of the indefinite, for the absolute and higher, and the limited for a mere negation of this indefiniteness. But this indefiniteness is itself only a negation, in contrast with the definite and finite. The I is solitude and absolute negation. The indefinite will is thus quite as much one-sided as the will, which continues merely in the definite.

7. (γ) The will is the unity of these two elements. It is particularity turned back within itself and thus led back to universality; it is individuality; it is the self-direction of the I. Thus at one and the same time it establishes itself as its own negation, that is to say, as definite and limited, and it also abides by itself, in its self-identity and universality, and in this position remains purely self-enclosed. — The I determines itself in so far as it is the reference of negativity to itself; and yet in this self-reference it is indifferent to its own definite character. This it knows as its own, that is, as an ideal or a mere possibility, by which it is not bound, but rather exists in it merely because it establishes itself there. — This is the freedom of the will, constituting its conception or substantive reality. It is its gravity, as it were, just as gravity is the substantive reality of a body.

Note. — Every self-consciousness knows itself as at once universal, or the possibility of abstracting itself from everything definite, and as particular, with a fixed object, content, or aim. These two elements, however, are only abstractions. The concrete and true — and all that is true is concrete — is the universality, to which the particular is at first opposed, but, when it has been turned back into itself, is in the end made equal. — This unity is individuality, but it is not a simple unit as is the individuality of imaginative thought, but a unit in terms of the conception ("Encyclopædia of the Philosophical Sciences," §§ 112–114). In other words, this individuality is properly nothing else than the conception. The first two elements of the will, that it can abstract itself from everything, and that it is definite through either its own

activity or something else, are easily admitted and comprehended, because in their separation they are untrue, and characteristic of the mere understanding. But into the third, the true and speculative — and all truth, as far as it is conceived, must be thought speculatively — the understanding declines to venture, always calling the conception the inconceivable. The proof and more detailed explanation of this inmost reserve of speculation, of infinitude as the negativity which refers itself to itself, and of this ultimate source of all activity, life and consciousness, belong to logic, as the purely speculative philosophy. Here it can be noticed only in passing that, in the sentences, "The will is universal," "The will directs itself," the will is already regarded as presupposed subject or substratum; but it is not something finished and universal before it determines itself, nor yet before this determination is superseded and idealized. It is will only when its activity is self-occasioned, and it has returned into itself.

Addition. — What we properly call will contains the two abovementioned elements. The I is, first of all, as such, pure activity, the universal which is by itself. Next this universal determines itself, and so far is no longer by itself, but establishes itself as another, and ceases to be the universal. The third step is that the will, while in this limitation, *i. e.*, in this other, is by itself. While it limits itself, it yet remains with itself, and does not lose its hold of the universal. This is, then, the concrete conception of freedom, while the other two elements have been thoroughly abstract and one-sided. But this concrete freedom we already have in the form of perception, as in friendship and love. Here a man is not one-sided, but limits himself willingly in reference to another, and yet in this limitation knows himself as himself. In this determination he does not feel himself determined, but in the contemplation of the other as another has the feeling of himself. Freedom also lies neither in indeterminateness nor in determinateness, but in both. The wilful man has a will which limits itself wholly to a particular object, and if he has not this will, he supposes himself not to be free. But the will is not bound to a particular object, but must go further, for the nature of the will is not to be one-sided and confined. Free will consists in willing a definite

object, but in so doing to be by itself and to return again into the universal.

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22. The will which exists absolutely is truly infinite, because its object being the will itself, is for it not another or a limitation. In the object the will has simply reverted into itself. Moreover, it is not mere possibility, capacity, potentiality (*potentia*), but infinitely actual (*infinitum actu*), because the reality of the conception or its visible externality is internal to itself.

Note. — Hence when the free will is spoken of without the qualification of absolute freedom, only the capacity of freedom is meant, or the natural and finite will and, notwithstanding all words and opinions to the contrary, not the free will. Since the understanding comprehends the infinite only in its negative aspect, and hence as a beyond, it thinks to do the infinite all the more honour the farther it removes it into the vague distance, and the more it takes it as a foreign thing. In free will the true infinite is present and real; it is itself the actually present self-contained idea.

Addition. — The infinite has rightly been represented as a circle. The straight line goes out farther and farther, and symbolizes the merely negative and bad infinite, which, unlike the true, does not return into itself. The free will is truly infinite, for it is not a mere possibility, or disposition. Its external reality is its own inner nature, itself.

23. Only in this freedom is the will wholly by itself, because it refers to nothing but itself, and all dependence upon any other thing falls away. — The will is true, or rather truth itself, because its character consists in its being in its manifested reality, or correlative opposite, what it is in its conception. In other words, the pure conception has the perception or intuition of itself as its end and reality.

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DIVISION OF THE WORK

33. According to the stages in the development of the idea of the absolutely free will,

A. The will is direct or immediate; its conception is therefore abstract, *i. e.*, personality, and its embodied reality is a direct external thing. This is the sphere of abstract or formal right.

B. The will, passing out of external reality, turns back into itself. Its phase is subjective individuality, and it is contrasted with the universal. This universal is on its internal side the good, and on its external side a presented world, and these two sides are occasioned only by means of each other. In this sphere the idea is divided, and exists in separate elements. The right of the subjective will is in a relation of contrast to the right of the world, or the right of the idea. Here, however, the idea exists only implicitly. This is the sphere of morality.

C. The unity and truth of these two abstract elements. The thought idea of the good is realized both in the will turned back into itself, and also in the external world. Thus freedom exists as real substance, which is quite as much actuality and necessity as it is subjective will. The idea here is its absolutely universal existence, viz., ethical observance. This ethical substance is again,

a. Natural spirit; the family,

b. The civic community, or spirit in its dual existence and mere appearance,

c. The state, or freedom, which, while established in the free self-dependence of the particular will, is also universal and objective. This actual and organic spirit (α) is the spirit of a nation, (β) is found in the relation to one another of national spirits, and revealed in world history as the universal world-spirit, whose right (γ) passing through and beyond this relation is actualized and revealed in world history as the universal world-spirit, whose right is the highest.

FIRST PART. ABSTRACT RIGHT

34. The completely free will, when it is conceived abstractly, is in a condition of self-involved simplicity. What actuality it has when taken in this abstract way, consists in a negative attitude towards reality, and a bare abstract reference of itself to itself. Such an abstract will is the individual will of a subject. It, as

particular, has definite ends, and, as exclusive and individual, has these ends before itself as an externally and directly presented world.

Addition. — The remark that the completely free will, when it is taken abstractly, is in a condition of self-involved simplicity must be understood in this way. The completed idea of the will is found when the conception has realized itself fully, and in such a manner that the embodiment of the conception is nothing but the development of the conception itself. But at the outset the conception is abstract. All its future characters are implied in it, it is true, but as yet no more than implied. They are, in other words, potential, and are not yet developed into an articulate whole. If I say, "I am free," the I, here, is still implicit and has no real object opposed to it. But from the standpoint of morality as contrasted with abstract right there is opposition, because there I am a particular ill, while the good, though within me, is the universal. Hence, at that stage, the will contains within itself the contrast between particular and universal, and in that way is made definite. But at the beginning such a distinction does not occur, because in the first abstract unity there is as yet no progress or modification of any kind. That is what is meant by saying that the will has the mark of self-involved simplicity or immediate being. The chief thing to notice at this point is that this very absence of definite features is itself a definite feature. Absence of determinate character exists where there is as yet no distinction between the will and its content. But when this lack of definiteness is set in opposition to the definite, it becomes itself something definite. In other words, abstract identity becomes the distinguishing feature of the will, and the will thereby becomes an individual will or person.

35. This consciously free will has a universal side, which consists in a formal, simple, and pure reference to itself as a separate and independent unit. This reference is also a self-conscious one, though it has no further content. The subject is thus so far a person. It is implied in personality that I, as a distinct being, am on all sides completely bounded and limited, on the side of inner caprice, impulse, and appetite, as well as in my direct and visible outer life. But it is implied likewise that I stand in absolutely

pure relation to myself. Hence it is that in this finitude I know myself as infinite, universal, and free.

Note. — Personality does not arise till the subject has not merely a general consciousness of himself in some determinate mode of concrete existence, but rather a consciousness of himself as a completely abstract I, in which all concrete limits and values are negated and declared invalid. Hence personality involves the knowledge of one's self as an object, raised, however, by thought into the realm of pure infinitude, a realm, that is, in which it is purely identical with itself. Individuals and peoples have no personality, if they have not reached this pure thought and self-consciousness. In this way, too, the absolute or completed mind or spirit may be distinguished from its mere semblance. The semblance, though self-conscious, is aware of itself only as a merely natural will with its external objects. The other, as an abstract and pure I, has itself as its end and object, and is therefore a person.

Addition. — The abstract will, the will which exists for itself, is a person. The highest aim of man is to be a person, and yet again the mere abstraction "person" is not held in high esteem. Person is essentially different from subject. Subject is only the possibility of personality. Any living thing at all is a subject, while person is a subject which has its subjectivity as an object. As a person I exist for myself. Personality is the free being in pure self-conscious isolation. I as a person am conscious of freedom. I can abstract myself from everything, since nothing is before me except pure personality. Notwithstanding all this I am as a particular person completely limited. I am of a certain age, height, in this space, and so on. Thus a person is at one and the same time so exalted and so lowly a thing. In him is the unity of infinite and finite, of limit and unlimited. The dignity of personality can sustain a contradiction, which neither contains nor could tolerate anything natural.

36. (1) Personality implies, in general, a capacity to possess rights, and constitutes the conception and abstract basis of abstract right. This right, being abstract, must be formal also. Its mandate is: Be a person and respect others as persons.

37. (2) The particularity of the will, that phase of the will, namely, which implies a consciousness of my specific interests, is doubtless an element of the whole consciousness of the will (§ 34), but it is not contained in mere abstract personality. It is indeed present in the form of appetite, want, impulse, and random desire, but is distinct as yet from the personality, which is the essence of freedom. — In treating of formal right, therefore, we do not trench upon special interests, such as my advantage or my well-being, nor have we here to do with any special reason or intention of the will.

Addition. — Since the particular phases of the person have not as yet attained the form of freedom, everything relating to these elements is so far a matter of indifference. When any one bases a claim upon his mere formal right, he may be wholly selfish, and often such a claim comes from a contracted heart and mind. Uncivilized man, in general, holds fast to his rights, while a more generous disposition is alert to see all sides of the question. Abstract right is, moreover, the first mere possibility, and in contrast with the whole context of a given relation is still formal. The possession of a right gives a certain authority, it is true, but it is not, therefore, absolutely necessary that I insist upon a right, which is only one aspect of the whole matter. In a word, possibility is something, which means that it either may or may not exist.

38. In contrast with the deeper significance of a concrete act in all its moral and social bearings, abstract right is only a possibility. Such a right is, therefore, only a permission or indication of legal power. Because of this abstract character of right the only rule which is unconditionally its own is merely the negative principle not to injure personality or anything which of necessity belongs to it. Hence we have here only prohibitions, the positive form of command having in the last resort a prohibition as its basis.

39. (3) A person in his direct and definite individuality is related to a given external nature. To this outer world the personality is opposed as something subjective. But to confine to mere subjectivity the personality, which is meant to be infinite and universal, contradicts and destroys its nature. It bestirs itself

to abrogate the limitation by giving itself reality, and proceeds to make the outer visible existence its own.

40. Right is at first the simple and direct concrete existence which freedom gives itself directly. This unmodified existence is

(*a*) Possession or property. Here freedom is that of the abstract will in general, or of a separate person who relates himself only to himself.

(*b*) A person by distinguishing himself from himself becomes related to another person, although the two have no fixed existence for each other except as owners. Their implicit identity becomes realized through a transference of property by mutual consent, and with the preservation of their rights. This is contract.

(*c*) The will in its reference to itself, as in (*a*), may be at variance not with some other person, (*b*), but within itself. As a particular will it may differ from and be in opposition to its true and absolute self. This is wrong and crime.

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SECOND PART. MORALITY

105. The moral standpoint is the standpoint of the will, not in its abstract or implicit existence, but in its existence for itself, an existence which is infinite (§ 104). This turning back of the will upon itself, or its actual self-identity, with its associated phases stands in contrast to its abstract implicit existence, and converts person into subject.

106. Subjectivity is the conception made definite, differing therefore from the abstract, general will. Further, the will of the subject, though it still retains traces of self-involved simplicity, is the will of an individual, who is an object for himself. Hence subjectivity is the realization of the conception. — This gives freedom a higher ground. Now at last there appears in the idea the side of its real existence, the subjectivity of the will. It is only in the will as subjective that freedom, or the potentially existing will, can be actualized.

Note. — Morality, the second sphere, gives an outline of the

real side of the conception of freedom. Observe the process through which morality passes. As the will has now withdrawn into itself, it appears at the outset as existing independently, having merely a potential identity with the intrinsic or universal will. Then this abstract self-dependence is superseded; and, finally, the will is made really and consciously identical with the intrinsic or universal will. Now in this movement, as I have said, is illustrated the conception of freedom. Freedom or subjectivity is at first abstract and distinct from the conception of it. Then by means of this movement the soul of freedom is so worked up, that for the conception, and necessarily also for the idea, it receives its true realization. The process ends, therefore, when the subjective will has become an objective and truly concrete will.

Addition. — In right, taken strictly, nothing depends upon my purpose or intention. The question of the self-determination, impulse, or purpose of the will arises for the first time in morality. Since a man is to be judged according to the direction he has given himself, he is in this act free, let the external features of the act be what they may. As no one can successfully assail a man's inner conviction, and no force can reach it, the moral will is inaccessible. A man's worth is estimated by his inner act. Hence the moral standpoint implies the realization of freedom.

107. As self-determination of will is at the same time a factor of the will's conception, subjectivity is not merely the outward reality of will, but its inner being (§ 104). This free and independent will, having now become the will of a subject, and assuming in the first instance the form of the conception, has itself a visible realization; otherwise it could not attain to the idea. The moral standpoint is in its realized form the right of the subjective will. In accordance with this right the will recognizes and is a thing, only in so far as the thing is the will's own, and the will in it is itself and subjective.

Note. — The process of the moral standpoint (*Note* to preceding paragraph) also appears as the development of the right of the subjective will, or of the way in which the subjective will is realized. Thus the will accounts what in its object it recognizes to be its own as its true conception, its objective or universal reality.

Addition. — Subjectivity of will, as a complete phase, is in its turn a whole which, by its very nature, must also have objectivity. Freedom can at first realize itself only in the subject, as it is the true material for this realization. But this concrete manifestation of will, which we have called subjectivity, is different from absolute will. From this new one-sidedness of subjectivity must the will free itself, in order that it may become absolute will. In morality the interest peculiar to man is in question, and the high value of this interest consists in man's knowing himself to be absolute, and determining himself. Uncivilized man is controlled by the forces and occurrences of nature. Children have no moral will, but are guided by their parents. Civilized man is determined from within, and wills that he shall be in all he does.

108. The subjective will, in so far as it is directly its own object and distinct from the general will (§ 106, *note*), is abstract, limited, and formal. Subjectivity, however, is not formal merely, but, since it is the infinite self-direction of the will, is the will itself taken formally. Since this formal character, as it appears first of all in the particular will, is not as yet identical with the conception of will, the moral standpoint is the standpoint of relation, of obligation or requirement. — Since, too, subjectivity involves difference, that is to say, opposition to objectivity as to a mere external existence, there arises here also the standpoint of consciousness (§ 8), the standpoint of difference in general, of the finite and phenomenal phase of the will.

Note. — The moral is not at once opposed to the immoral, just as right is not directly opposed to wrong. The general standpoint of both the moral and the immoral depends upon the subjectivity of the will.

Addition. — In morality self-determination is to be construed as a restless activity, which cannot be satisfied with anything that is. Only in the region of established ethical principles is the will identical with the conception of it, and has only this conception for its content. In morality the will is as yet related to what is potential. This is the standpoint of difference, and the process of this standpoint is the identification of the subjective will with the conception of will. The imperative or ought, which, therefore,

still is in morality, is fulfilled only in the ethical sphere. This sphere, to which the subjective will is related, has a twofold nature. It is the substance of the conception, and also external reality. If the good were established in the subjective will, it would not yet be realized.

109. The formal will, by its own determining character, contains at the outset the opposition of subjectivity and objectivity, and the appropriate activity (§ 8). Of this will we have these further phases. Concrete realization and determinate character are in the conception identical. The conception of the subjective will is first to make these two phases separate and independent, and then to establish them as identical. Determinate character in the self-determined will (α) is brought about in itself by itself, the opposition which it creates within itself being a self-bestowed content. This is the first negation, whose formal limit consists in its being fixed as merely subjective. (β) Since the will returns into itself and is infinite, this limit exists for it, and it wills to transcend the limitation. Hence it strives to convert its content out of subjectivity into objectivity, *i. e.*, some kind of directly given reality. (γ) The simple identity of the will with itself in this opposition is the content, which maintains itself amid these oppositions, and is indifferent to formal distinctions. This content is the purpose or end.

110. As at the moral standpoint, freedom or self-identity of will is for the will (§ 105), the simple identity of the content or end receives a further characteristic peculiar to itself.

(*a*) This content becomes mine in such a way that it in its identity is not only my inner end, but also, so far as it is externally realized, contains for me my subjectivity.

Addition. — The content of the subjective or moral will has a special character. Although it has attained the form of objectivity, it is yet always to contain my subjectivity. An act shall be counted mine only so far as it is on its inner side issued by me, and was my own proposition and intention. I do not recognize as mine anything in the outward act except what lay in my subjective will, and in the outer act I desire to see my subjective consciousness repeated.

111. (*b*) The content, though it contains something particular, from whatever source it comes, is yet the content of a self-referring will, which is also self-identical and universal. Thus it has these two features. (*α*) It aims to be in itself adequate to the universal will, or to have the objectivity of the conception; (*β*) yet, since the subjective will exists for itself, and is therefore independent and formal (§ 108), its aim is only an ought and is possibly not adequate to the conception.

112. (*c*) Though I preserve my subjectivity in accomplishing my ends (§ 110), yet in the objectification of these ends I pass beyond the simple and elementary subjectivity which is merely my own. This new external subjectivity, which is identical with me, is the will of others. The sphere for the existence of the will is subjectivity, and the will of others is the existence, which, though other than I, I yet give to my purpose. Hence the accomplishment of my purpose contains the identity of my will and that of others, and has to the will of others a relation which is positive.

Note. — The objectivity of the realized end has three senses, or rather contains in union the three following phases. (*α*) It is external direct reality (§ 109). (*β*) It is adequate to the conceptions (§ 112). (*γ*) It is universal subjectivity. The subjectivity which preserves itself in this objectivity implies (*α*) that the objective end shall be my own, so that in it I preserve myself as a particular individual (§ 110). The two phases (*β*) and (*γ*) of subjectivity concur with the phases (*β*) and (*γ*) of objectivity. At the moral standpoint these various phases are distinguished or joined merely in a contradiction. This is the superficial and finite nature of the moral sphere (§ 108). The development of the standpoint consists in the development of these contradictions and their solution, an achievement which at the present point of view is incomplete or merely relative.

Addition. — It was said that formal right contained only prohibitions, and that from the strict standpoint of legal right an act had only a negative reference to the will of others. In morals, on the contrary, the relation of my will to that of others is positive; that, which the subjective will realizes, contains the universal will. In this is present the production or alteration of some visible

reality, and this has a bearing upon the will of others. The conception of morality is the internal relation of the will to itself. But there is here more than one will, since the objectification of the will implies the transcendence of the one-sidedness of the separate will, and the substitution of two wills having a positive relation one to the other. In right my will is realized in property, and there is no room for any reference of the will of others to my will. But morality treats of the well-being of others also. At this point this positive relation to others first makes its appearance.

113. The expression of the subjective or moral will is action. Of action it may be said that (α) I know its external fulfilment to be mine, (β) it is essentially related to the conception in its phase as the ought or imperative, and (γ) it is essentially connected with the will of others.

Note. — Firstly, the expression of the moral will is action. The embodiment achieved by the will in formal right is a mere object. This realization is direct, and has in the first instance no actual express reference to the conception. Not having as yet come into conflict with the subjective will, the conception is not yet distinguished from it, and has no positive relation to the will of others. The commands of right are, hence, fundamentally prohibitions (§ 38). In contract and wrong, indeed, there begins to be seen a relation to the will of others, but the agreement, found at this point, is based upon arbitrary choice, while the essential reference to the will of others is in right merely the negative proposal to keep my property or its value, and to let others keep theirs. Crime does in a way issue from the subjective will. But the content of a crime is fixed by written instructions and is not directly imputable to me. Hence as the legal act contains only some elements of a distinctively moral act, the two kinds of action are different.

114. The right of the moral will has three factors:

(a) The abstract or formal right. The act, as directly realized, is to be in its essential content mine, and embody the purpose of the subjective will.

(b) The specific side of an act or its inner content. (α) This is intention, which is for me, whose general character is fixed, the value and inner substance of the act, (β) and well-being, or the

content taken as the particular end of my particular, subjective reality.

(*c*) The good, or the content taken as universal and exalted to universality and absolute objectivity. This is the absolute end of the will. As this is the sphere of reflection, we have the opposition of the universality, which is subjective, and hence involves in one aspect evil, and in another conscience.

Addition. — An act, to be moral, must in the first instance accord with my purpose, since the right of the moral will is to recognize as its realization nothing which is not found internally in the purpose. Purpose concerns the formal principle that the externalized will must also be internal to me. In the next place we ask after the intention, that is, the value of the act relatively to me. The third factor is not merely the relative, but the universal value of the act, the good. In the first phase of an act there is a breach between purpose and realization; in the second between what is given externally as universal will, and the particular internal character, which I give it; the third and last phase is the claim of my intention to be the universal content. The good is the intention exalted to the conception of the will.

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THIRD PART. THE ETHICAL SYSTEM

142. The ethical system is the idea of freedom. It is the living good, which has in self-consciousness its knowing and willing, and through the action of self-consciousness its actuality. Self-consciousness, on the other hand, finds in the ethical system its absolute basis and motive. The ethical system is thus the conception of freedom developed into a present world, and also into the nature of self-consciousness.

143. The conception of the will, when united with the realization of the will, or the particular will, is knowing. Hence arises the consciousness of the distinction between these two phases of the idea. But the consciousness is now present in such a way that

each phase is separately the totality of the idea, and has the idea as its content and foundation.

144. The objective ethical principle which takes the place of the abstract good is in its substance concrete through the presence in it of subjectivity as its infinite form. Hence it makes differences which are within itself, and therefore are due to the conception. By means of these differences, it obtains a sure content, which is independent and necessary, and reaches a standing ground raised above subjective opinion and liking. This content is the self-originated and self-referring laws and regulations.

Addition. — In the ethical principle as a whole occur both the objective and the subjective elements; but of this principle each is only a form. Here the good is substance, or the filling of the objective with subjectivity. If we contemplate the social order from the objective standpoint, we can say that man, as ethical, is unconscious of himself. In this sense Antigone proclaims that no one knows whence the laws come; they are everlasting, that is, they exist absolutely, and flow from the nature of things. None the less has this substantive existence a consciousness also, which, however, is only one element of the whole.

145. The ethical material is rational, because it is the system of these phases of the idea. Thus freedom, the absolute will, the objective, and the circle of necessity, are all one principle, whose elements are the ethical forces. They rule the lives of individuals as their modes have their shape, manifestation, and actuality.

Addition. — Since the phases of the ethical system are the conception of freedom, they are the substance or universal essence of individuals. In relation to it, individuals are merely accidental. Whether the individual exists or not is a matter of indifference to the objective ethical order, which alone is steadfast. It is the power by which the life of individuals is ruled. It has been represented by nations as eternal justice, or as deities who are absolute, in contrast with whom the striving of individuals is an empty game, like the tossing of the sea.

146. (β) This ethical reality in its actual self-consciousness knows itself, and is therefore an object of knowledge. It, with its laws and forces, has for the subject a real existence, and is in the

fullest sense independent. It has an absolute authority or force, infinitely more sure than that of natural objects.

Note. — The sun, moon, mountains, rivers, and all objects of nature doubtless exist. They not only have for consciousness the authority of existence in general, but have also a particular nature. This nature consciousness regards as valid, and in its varied relation and commerce with objects and their use comports itself accordingly. But the authority of the social laws is infinitely higher, because natural things represent reason only in a quite external and particular way, and hide it under the guise of contingency.

147. On the other hand, the various social forces are not something foreign to the subject. His spirit bears witness to them as to his own being. In them he feels that he is himself, and in them, too, he lives as in an element indistinguishable from himself. This relation is more direct and intuitive than even faith or trust.

Note. — Faith and trust belong to the beginning of reflection, presupposing picture thought and such discernment as that to believe in a heathen religion is different from being a heathen. The relation, or rather identity without relation, in which the ethical principle is the actual life of self-consciousness, can indeed be transformed into a relation of faith and conviction. By further reflection, also, it may pass into an insight based on reasons, which originate in some particular end, interest, or regard, in fear or hope, or in historical presuppositions. But the adequate knowledge of these belongs to the conception arrived at through thought.

148. The individual may distinguish himself from these substantive ethical factors, regarding himself as subjective, as of himself undetermined, or as determined to some particular course of action. He stands to them as to his substantive reality, and they are duties binding upon his will.

Note. — The ethical theory of duties in their objective character is not comprised under the empty principle of moral subjectivity, in which indeed, nothing is determined (§ 134), but is rightly taken up in the third part of our work, in which is found a systematic development of the sphere of ethical necessity. In

this present method of treatment, as distinguished from a theory of duties, the ethical factors are deduced as necessary relations. It is, then, needless to add, with regard to each of them, the remark that it is thus for men a duty. A theory of duties, so far as it is not a philosophic science, simply takes its material out of the relations at hand, and shows how it is connected with personal ideas, with widely prevalent principles and thoughts, with ends, impulses, and experiences. It may also adduce as reasons the consequences, which arise when each duty is referred to other ethical relations, as well as to general well-being and common opinion. But a theory of duties, which keeps to the logical settlement of its own inherent material, must be the development of the relations, which are made necessary through the idea of freedom, and are hence in their entire context actual. This is found only in the state.

149. A duty or obligation appears as a limitation merely of undetermined subjectivity and abstract freedom, or of the impulse of the natural will, or of the moral will which fixes upon its undetermined good capriciously. But in point of fact the individual finds in duty liberation. He is freed from subjection to mere natural impulse; he is freed from the dependence which he as subjective and particular felt towards moral permission and command; he is freed, also, from that indefinite subjectivity, which does not issue in the objective realization implied in action, but remains wrapped up in its own unreality. In duty the individual freely enters upon a liberty that is substantive.

Addition. — Duty limits only the caprice of subjectivity, and comes into collision only with abstract good, with which subjectivity is so firmly allied. When men say we will to be free, they have in mind simply that abstract liberty, of which every definite organization in the state is regarded as a limitation. But duty is not a limitation of freedom, but only of the abstraction of freedom, that is to say, of servitude. In duty we reach the real essence, and gain positive freedom.

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152. Substantive ethical reality attains its right, and this right receives its due, when the individual in his private will and con-

science drops his self-assertion and antagonism to the ethical. His character, moulded by ethical principles, takes as its motive the unmoved universal, which is open on all its sides to actual rationality. He recognizes that his worth and the stability of his private ends are grounded upon the universal, and derive their reality from it. Subjectivity is the absolute form and the existing actuality of the substance. The difference between the subject and substance, as the object, end, and power of the subject, forthwith vanishes, like the difference between form and matter.

Note. — Subjectivity, which is the foundation for the real existence of the conception of freedom (§ 106), is at the moral standpoint still distinguished from the conception. In ethics it is adequate to the conception, whose existence it is.

153. In that individuals belong to the ethical and social fabric they have a right to determine themselves subjectively and freely. Assurance of their freedom has its truth in the objectivity of ethical observance, in which they realize their own peculiar being and inner universality (§ 147).

Note. — To a father seeking the best way to bring up his son, a Pythagorean, or some other thinker, replied, "Make him a citizen of a state which has good laws."

Addition. — The attempts of speculative educators to withdraw people from their present social life and bring them up in the country, a proposal made by Rousseau in "Émile," have been vain, because no one can succeed in alienating man from the laws of the world. Although the education of young men must take place in solitude, we cannot believe that the odour of the world of spirits does not in the end penetrate their seclusion, or that the power of the spirit of the world is too feeble to take possession of even the remotest corner. Only when the individual is a citizen of a good state, does he receive his right.

154. The right of individuals to their particularity is contained in the concrete ethical order, because it is in particularity that the social principle finds a visible outer manifestation.

155. Right and duty coincide in the identity of the universal and the particular wills. By virtue of the ethical fabric man has rights, so far as he has duties, and duties so far as he has rights.

In abstract right, on the contrary, I have the right and another person the corresponding duty; and in morals I resolve to consider as an objective duty only the right of my own knowledge and will and of my own well-being.

Addition. — The slave can have no duties, but only the free man. If all rights were on one side and all duties on the other, the whole would be broken up. Identity is the only principle to which we must now adhere.

156. The ethical substance, as the union of self-consciousness with its conception, is the actual spirit of a family and a nation.

Addition. — The ethical framework is not abstract like the good, but in a special sense real. Spirit has actuality, and the accidents or modes of this actuality are individuals. Hence as to the ethical there are only two possible views. Either we start from the substantive social system, or we proceed atomically and work up from a basis of individuality. This latter method, because it leads to mere juxtaposition, is void of spirit, since mind or spirit is not something individual, but the unity of individual and universal.

157. The conception of this idea exists only as spirit, as active self-knowledge and reality, since it objectifies itself by passing through the form of its elements. Hence it is,

A. The direct or natural ethical spirit, the family. This reality, losing its unity, passes over into dismemberment, and assumes the nature of the relative. It thus becomes

B. The civic community, an association of members or independent individuals in a formal universality. Such an association is occasioned by needs, and is preserved by the law, which secures one's person and property, and by an external system for private and common interests.

C. This external state goes back to, and finds its central principle in, the end and actuality of the substantive universal, and of the public life dedicated to the maintenance of the universal. This is the state-constitution.

ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER

(1788–1860)

THE WORLD AS WILL AND IDEA

*Translated from the German * by*
R. B. HALDANE AND J. KEMP

BOOK IV. THE ASSERTION AND DENIAL OF THE WILL

§ 57. At every grade that is enlightened by knowledge, the will appears as an individual. The human individual finds himself as finite in infinite space and time, and consequently as a vanishing quantity compared with them. He is projected into them, and, on account of their unlimited nature, he has always a merely relative, never absolute *when* and *where* of his existence; for his place and duration are finite parts of what is infinite and boundless. His real existence is only in the present, whose unchecked flight into the past is a constant transition into death, a constant dying. For his past life, apart from its possible consequences for the present, and the testimony regarding the will that is expressed in it, is now entirely done with, dead, and no longer anything; and, therefore, it must be, as a matter of reason, indifferent to him whether the content of that past was pain or pleasure. But the present is always passing through his hands into the past; the future is quite uncertain and always short. Thus his existence, even when we consider only its formal side, is a constant hurrying of the present into the dead past, a constant dying. But if we look at it from the physical side, it is clear that, as our walking is admittedly merely a constantly prevented falling, the life of our body is only a constantly prevented dying, an ever-postponed death: finally, in the same way, the

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activity of our mind is a constantly deferred ennui. Every breath we draw wards off the death that is constantly intruding upon us. In this way we fight with it every moment, and again, at longer intervals, through every meal we eat, every sleep we take, every time we warm ourselves, etc. In the end, death must conquer, for we became subject to him through birth, and he only plays for a little while with his prey before he swallows it up. We pursue our life, however, with great interest and much solicitude as long as possible, as we blow out a soap-bubble as long and as large as possible, although we know perfectly well that it will burst.

We saw that the inner being of unconscious nature is a constant striving without end and without rest. And this appears to us much more distinctly when we consider the nature of brutes and man. Willing and striving is its whole being, which may be very well compared to an unquenchable thirst. But the basis of all willing is need, deficiency, and thus pain. Consequently, the nature of brutes and man is subject to pain originally and through its very being. If, on the other hand, it lacks objects of desire, because it is at once deprived of them by a too easy satisfaction, a terrible void and ennui comes over it, *i. e.*, its being and existence itself becomes an unbearable burden to it. Thus its life swings like a pendulum backwards and forwards between pain and ennui. This has also had to express itself very oddly in this way; after man had transferred all pain and torments to hell, there then remained nothing over for heaven but ennui.

But the constant striving which constitutes the inner nature of every manifestation of will obtains its primary and most general foundation at the higher grades of objectification, from the fact that here the will manifests itself as a living body, with the iron command to nourish it; and what gives strength to this command is just that this body is nothing but the objectified will to live itself. Man, as the most complete objectification of that will, is in like measure also the most necessitous of all beings: he is through and through concrete willing and needing; he is a concretion of a thousand necessities. With these he stands upon the earth, left to himself, uncertain about everything except his own need and misery. Consequently the care for the maintenance of

that existence under exacting demands, which are renewed every day, occupies, as a rule, the whole of human life. To this is directly related the second claim, that of the propagation of the species. At the same time he is threatened from all sides by the most different kinds of dangers, from which it requires constant watchfulness to escape. With cautious steps and casting anxious glances round him he pursues his path, for a thousand accidents and a thousand enemies lie in wait for him. Thus he went while yet a savage, thus he goes in civilized life; there is no security for him.

Qualibus in tenebris vitae, quantisque periclis
Degitur hocc' aevi, quodcunque est! (Lucr. ii. 15.)

The life of the great majority is only a constant struggle for this existence itself, with the certainty of losing it at last. But what enables them to endure this wearisome battle is not so much the love of life as the fear of death, which yet stands in the background as inevitable, and may come upon them at any moment. Life itself is a sea, full of rocks and whirlpools, which man avoids with the greatest care and solicitude, although he knows that even if he succeeds in getting through with all his efforts and skill, he yet by doing so comes nearer at every step to the greatest, the total, inevitable, and irremediable shipwreck, death; nay, even steers right upon it: this is the final goal of the laborious voyage, and worse for him than all the rocks from which he has escaped.

Now it is well worth observing that, on the one hand, the suffering and misery of life may easily increase to such an extent that death itself, in the flight from which the whole of life consists, becomes desirable, and we hasten towards it voluntarily; and again, on the other hand, that as soon as want and suffering permit rest to a man, ennui is at once so near that he necessarily requires diversion. The striving after existence is what occupies all living things and maintains them in motion. But when existence is assured, then they know not what to do with it; thus the second thing that sets them in motion is the effort to get free from the burden of existence, to make it cease to be felt, "to kill time," *i.e.*, to escape from ennui. Accordingly we see that almost all men who are secure from want and care, now that at last they have

thrown off all other burdens, become a burden to themselves, and regard as a gain every hour they succeed in getting through, and thus every diminution of the very life which, till then, they have employed all their powers to maintain as long as possible. Ennui is by no means an evil to be lightly esteemed; in the end it depicts on the countenance real despair. It makes beings who love each other so little as men do, seek each other eagerly, and thus becomes the source of social intercourse. Moreover, even from motives of policy, public precautions are everywhere taken against it, as against other universal calamities. For this evil may drive men to the greatest excesses, just as much as its opposite extreme, famine: the people require *panem et circenses*. As want is the constant scourge of the people, so ennui is that of the fashionable world. In middle-class life ennui is represented by the Sunday, and want by the six week-days.

Thus between desiring and attaining all human life flows on throughout. The wish is, in its nature, pain; the attainment soon begets satiety: the end was only apparent; possession takes away the charm; the wish, the need, presents itself under a new form; when it does not, then follows desolateness, emptiness, ennui, against which the conflict is just as painful as against want. That wish and satisfaction should follow each other neither too quickly nor too slowly reduces the suffering which both occasion to the smallest amount, and constitutes the happiest life. For that which we might otherwise call the most beautiful part of life, its purest joy, if it were only because it lifts us out of real existence and transforms us into disinterested spectators of it — that is, pure knowledge, which is foreign to all willing, the pleasure of the beautiful, the true delight in art — this is granted only to a very few, because it demands rare talents, and to these few only as a passing dream. And then, even these few, on account of their higher intellectual power, are made susceptible of far greater suffering than duller minds can ever feel, and are also placed in lonely isolation by a nature which is obviously different from that of others; thus here also accounts are squared. But to the great majority of men purely intellectual pleasures are not accessible. They are almost quite incapable of the joys which lie in pure

knowledge. They are entirely given up to willing. If, therefore, anything is to win their sympathy, to be *interesting* to them, it must (as is implied in the meaning of the word) in some way excite their *will*, even if it is only through a distant and merely problematical relation to it; the will must not be left altogether out of the question, for their existence lies far more in willing than in knowing, — action and reaction is their one element. We may find in trifles and every-day occurrences the naïve expressions of this quality. Thus, for example, at any place worth seeing they may visit, they write their names, in order thus to react, to affect the place since it does not affect them. Again, when they see a strange, rare animal, they cannot easily confine themselves to merely observing it; they must rouse it, tease it, play with it, merely to experience action and reaction; but this need for excitement of the will manifests itself very specially in the discovery and support of card-playing, which is quite peculiarly the expression of the miserable side of humanity.

But whatever nature and fortune may have done, whoever a man be and whatever he may possess, the pain which is essential to life cannot be thrown off: Πηλείδης δ' ὤμωξεν, ἰδὼν εἰς οὐρανὸν εὐρύν (*Pelides autem ejulavit, intuitus in coelum latum*). And again: Ζηνὸς μὲν παῖς ἦα Κρονίονος, αὐτὰρ ὀϊζὺν εἶχον ἀπειρεσίην (*Jovis quidem filius eram Saturnii; verum aerumnam habebam infinitam*). The ceaseless efforts to banish suffering accomplish no more than to make it change its form. It is essentially deficiency, want, care for the maintenance of life. If we succeed, which is very difficult, in removing pain in this form, it immediately assumes a thousand others, varying according to age and circumstances, such as lust, passionate love, jealousy, envy, hatred, anxiety, ambition, covetousness, sickness, etc., etc. If at last it can find entrance in no other form, it comes in the sad, grey garments of tediousness and ennui, against which we then strive in various ways. If finally we succeed in driving this away, we shall hardly do so without letting pain enter in one of its earlier forms, and the dance begin again from the beginning; for all human life is tossed backwards and forwards between pain and ennui. Depressing as this view of life is, I will draw attention, by the way, to an aspect of it

from which consolation may be drawn, and perhaps even a stoical indifference to one's own present ills may be attained. For our impatience at these arises for the most part from the fact that we regard them as brought about by a chain of causes which might easily be different. We do not generally grieve over ills which are directly necessary and quite universal; for example, the necessity of age and of death, and many daily inconveniences. It is rather the consideration of the accidental nature of the circumstances that brought some sorrow just to us, that gives it its sting. But if we have recognized that pain, as such, is inevitable and essential to life, and that nothing depends upon chance but its mere fashion, the form under which it presents itself, that thus our present sorrow fills a place that, without it, would at once be occupied by another which now is excluded by it, and that therefore fate can affect us little in what is essential; such a reflection, if it were to become a living conviction, might produce a considerable degree of stoical equanimity, and very much lessen the anxious care for our own well-being. But, in fact, such a powerful control of reason over directly felt suffering seldom or never occurs.

§ 68. If we compare life to a course or path through which we must unceasingly run — a path of red-hot coals, with a few cool places here and there; then he who is entangled in delusion is consoled by the cool places, on which he now stands, or which he sees near him, and sets out to run through the course. But he who sees through the *principium individuationis*, and recognizes the real nature of the thing-in-itself, and thus the whole, is no longer susceptible of such consolation; he sees himself in all places at once, and withdraws. His will turns round, no longer asserts its own nature, which is reflected in the phenomenon, but denies it. The phenomenon by which this change is marked, is the transition from virtue to asceticism. That is to say, it no longer suffices for such a man to love others as himself, and to do as much for them as for himself; but there arises within him a horror of the nature of which his own phenomenal existence is an expression, the will to live, the kernel and inner nature of that world which is recognized as full of misery. He therefore disowns this nature

which appears in him, and is already expressed through his body, and his action gives the lie to his phenomenal existence, and appears in open contradiction to it. Essentially nothing else but a manifestation of will, he ceases to will anything, guards against attaching his will to anything, and seeks to confirm in himself the greatest indifference to everything. His body, healthy and strong, expresses through the genitals the sexual impulse; but he denies the will and gives the lie to the body; he desires no sensual gratification under any condition. Voluntary and complete chastity is the first step in asceticism or the denial of the will to live. It thereby denies the assertion of the will which extends beyond the individual life, and gives the assurance that with the life of this body, the will, whose manifestation it is, ceases. Nature, always true and naïve, declares that if this maxim became universal, the human race would die out; and I think I may assume, in accordance with what was said in the Second Book about the connection of all manifestations of will, that with its highest manifestation, the weaker reflection of it would also pass away, as the twilight vanishes along with the full light. With the entire abolition of knowledge, the rest of the world would of itself vanish into nothing; for without a subject there is no object. I should like here to refer to a passage in the Vedas, where it is said: "As in this world hungry infants press round their mother; so do all beings await the holy oblation." Sacrifice means resignation generally, and the rest of nature must look for its salvation to man who is at once the priest and the sacrifice. Indeed it deserves to be noticed as very remarkable, that this thought has also been expressed by the admirable and unfathomably profound Angelus Silesius, in the little poem entitled, "Man brings all to God"; it runs, "Man! all loves thee; around thee great is the throng. All things flee to thee that they may attain to God." But a yet greater mystic, Meister Eckhard, whose wonderful writings are at last accessible (1857) through the edition of Franz Pfeiffer, says the same thing (p. 459) quite in the sense explained here: "I bear witness to the saying of Christ. I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things unto me (John xii. 32). So shall the good man draw all things up to God, to the source whence they first came. The Masters certify

to us that all creatures are made for the sake of man. This is proved in all created things, by the fact that the one makes the use of the other; the ox makes use of the grass, the fish of the water, the bird of the air, the wild beast of the forest. Thus, all created things become of use to the good man. A good man brings to God the one created thing in the other." He means to say, that man makes use of the brutes in this life because, in and with himself, he saves them also.

In Buddhism also, there is no lack of expressions of this truth. For example, when Buddha, still as Bodisatwa, has his horse saddled for the last time, for his flight into the wilderness from his father's house, he says these lines to the horse: "Long hast thou existed in life and in death, but now thou shalt cease from carrying and drawing. Bear me but this once more, O Kantakana, away from here, and when I have attained to the Law (have become Buddha) I will not forget thee."

Asceticism then shows itself further in voluntary and intentional poverty, which not only arises *per accidens*, because the possessions are given away to mitigate the sufferings of others, but is here an end in itself, is meant to serve as a constant mortification of will, so that the satisfaction of the wishes, the sweet of life, shall not again arouse the will, against which self-knowledge has conceived a horror. He who has attained to this point, still always feels, as a living body, as concrete manifestation of will, the natural disposition for every kind of volition; but he intentionally suppresses it, for he compels himself to refrain from doing all that he would like to do, and to do all that he would like not to do, even if this has no further end than that of serving as a mortification of will. Since he himself denies the will which appears in his own person, he will not resist if another does the same, *i. e.*, inflicts wrongs upon him. Therefore every suffering coming to him from without, through chance or the wickedness of others, is welcome to him, every injury, ignominy, and insult; he receives them gladly as the opportunity of learning with certainty that he no longer asserts the will, but gladly sides with every enemy of the manifestation of will which is his own person. Therefore he bears such ignominy and suffering with inexhaustible patience and

meekness, returns good for evil without ostentation, and allows the fire of anger to rise within him just as little as that of the desires. And he mortifies not only the will itself, but also its visible form, its objectivity, the body. He nourishes it sparingly, lest its excessive vigour and prosperity should animate and excite more strongly the will, of which it is merely the expression and the mirror. So he practises fasting, and even resorts to chastisement and self-inflicted torture, in order that, by constant privation and suffering, he may more and more break down and destroy the will, which he recognizes and abhors as the source of his own suffering existence and that of the world. If at last death comes, which puts an end to this manifestation of that will, whose existence here has long since perished through free-denial of itself, with the exception of the weak residue of it which appears as the life of this body; it is most welcome, and is gladly received as a longed-for deliverance. Here it is not, as in the case of others, merely the manifestation which ends with death; but the inner nature itself is abolished, which here existed only in the manifestation, and that in a very weak degree; this last slight bond is now broken. For him who thus ends, the world has ended also.

And what I have here described with feeble tongue and only in general terms, is no philosophical fable, invented by myself, and only of to-day; no, it was the enviable life of so many saints and beautiful souls among Christians, and still more among Hindus and Buddhists, and also among the believers of other religions. However different were the dogmas impressed on their reason, the same inward, direct, intuitive knowledge, from which alone all virtue and holiness proceed, expressed itself in precisely the same way in the conduct of life. For here also the great distinction between intuitive and abstract knowledge shows itself; a distinction which is of such importance and universal application in our whole investigation, and which has hitherto been too little attended to. There is a wide gulf between the two, which can only be crossed by the aid of philosophy, as regards the knowledge of the nature of the world. Intuitively or *in concreto*, every man is really conscious of all philosophical truths, but to bring them to abstract knowledge, to reflection, is the work

of philosophy, which neither ought nor is able to do more than this.

Thus it may be that the inner nature of holiness, self-renunciation, mortification of our own will, asceticism, is here for the first time expressed abstractly, and free from all mythical elements, as *denial of the will to live*, appearing after the complete knowledge of its own nature has become a quieter of all volition. On the other hand, it has been known directly and realized in practice by saints and ascetics, who had all the same inward knowledge, though they used very different language with regard to it, according to the dogmas which their reason had accepted, and in consequence of which an Indian, a Christian, or a Lama saint must each give a very different account of his conduct, which is, however, of no importance as regards the fact. A saint may be full of the absurdest superstition, or, on the contrary, he may be a philosopher, it is all the same. His conduct alone certifies that he is a saint, for, in a moral regard, it proceeds from knowledge of the world and its nature, which is not abstractly but intuitively and directly apprehended, and is only expressed by him in any dogma for the satisfaction of his reason. It is therefore just as little needful that a saint should be a philosopher as that a philosopher should be a saint; just as it is not necessary that a perfectly beautiful man should be a great sculptor, or that a great sculptor should himself be a beautiful man. In general, it is a strange demand upon a moralist that he should teach no other virtue than that which he himself possesses. To repeat the whole nature of the world abstractly, universally, and distinctly in concepts, and thus to store up, as it were, a reflected image of it in permanent concepts always at the command of the reason; this and nothing else is philosophy.

But the description I have given above of the denial of the will to live, of the conduct of a beautiful soul, of a resigned and voluntarily expiating saint, is merely abstract and general, and therefore cold. As the knowledge from which the denial of the will proceeds is intuitive and not abstract, it finds its most perfect expression, not in abstract conceptions, but in deeds and conduct. Therefore, in order to understand fully what we philosophically

express as denial of the will to live, one must come to know examples of it in experience and actual life. Certainly they are not to be met with in daily experience: *Nam omnia praeclara tam difficilia quam rara sunt*, Spinoza admirably says. Therefore, unless by a specially happy fate we are made eye-witnesses, we have to content ourselves with descriptions of the lives of such men. Indian literature, as we see from the little that we as yet know through translations, is very rich in descriptions of the lives of saints, penitents, Samanas or ascetics, Sannyâsis or mendicants, and whatever else they may be called. Among Christians also there is no lack of examples which afford us the illustrations we desire. Collections of such biographies have been made at various times. To this category very properly belongs the life of St. Francis of Assisi, that true personification of the ascetic, and prototype of all mendicant friars. . . . But as a special and exceedingly full example and practical illustration of the conceptions I have established, I can thoroughly recommend the "Autobiography of Madame de Guion." To become acquainted with this great and beautiful soul, the very thought of whom always fills me with reverence, and to do justice to the excellence of her disposition while making allowance for the superstition of her reason, must be just as delightful to every man of the better sort as with vulgar thinkers, *i. e.*, the majority, that book will always stand in bad repute. For it is the case with regard to everything, that each man can only prize that which to a certain extent is analogous to him and for which he has at least a slight inclination. This holds good of ethical concerns as well as of intellectual. We might to a certain extent regard the well-known French biography of Spinoza as a case in point, if we used as a key to it that noble introduction to his very insufficient essay, *De Emendatione Intellectus*, a passage which I can also recommend as the most effectual means I know of stilling the storm of the passions. Finally, even the great Goethe, Greek as he is, did not think it below his dignity to show us this most beautiful side of humanity in the magic mirror of poetic art, for he represented the life of Fräulein Klettenberg in an idealized form in his "Confessions of a Beautiful Soul," and later, in his own

biography, gave us also an historical account of it. Besides this, he twice told the story of the life of St. Philippo Nero. The history of the world will, and indeed must, keep silence about the men whose conduct is the best and only adequate illustration of this important point of our investigation, for the material of the history of the world is quite different, and indeed opposed to this. It is not the denial of the will to live, but its assertion and its manifestation in innumerable individuals in which its conflict with itself at the highest grade of its objectification appears with perfect distinctness, and brings before our eyes, now the ascendancy of the individual through prudence, now the might of the many through their mass, now the might of chance personified as fate, always the vanity and emptiness of the whole effort. We, however, do not follow here the course of phenomena in time, but, as philosophers, we seek to investigate the ethical significance of action, and take this as the only criterion of what for us is significant and important. Thus we will not be withheld by any fear of the constant numerical superiority of vulgarity and dulness from acknowledging that the greatest, most important, and most significant phenomenon that the world can show is not the conqueror of the world, but the subduer of it; is nothing but the quiet, unobserved life of a man who has attained to the knowledge in consequence of which he surrenders and denies that will to live which fills everything and strives and strains in all, and which first gains freedom here in him alone, so that his conduct becomes the exact opposite of that of other men. In this respect, therefore, for the philosopher, these accounts of the lives of holy, self-denying men, badly as they are generally written, and mixed as they are with superstition and nonsense, are, because of the significance of the material, immeasurably more instructive and important than even Plutarch and Livy.

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The more intense the will is, the more glaring is the conflict of its manifestation, and thus the greater is the suffering. A world which was the manifestation of a far more intense will to live than this world manifests would produce so much the greater suffering; would thus be a hell.

All suffering, since it is a mortification and a call to resignation, has potentially a sanctifying power. This is the explanation of the fact that every great misfortune or deep pain inspires a certain awe. But the sufferer only really becomes an object of reverence when, surveying the course of his life as a chain of sorrows, or mourning some great and incurable misfortune, he does not really look at the special combination of circumstances which has plunged his own life into suffering, nor stops at the single great misfortune that has befallen him; for in so doing his knowledge still follows the principle of sufficient reason, and clings to the particular phenomenon; he still wills life, only not under the conditions which have happened to him; but only then, I say, is he truly worthy of reverence when he raises his glance from the particular to the universal, when he regards his suffering as merely an example of the whole, and for him, since in a moral regard he partakes of genius, one case stands for a thousand, so that the whole of life conceived as essentially suffering brings him to resignation. Therefore it inspires reverence when in Goethe's "Torquato Tasso" the princess speaks of how her own life and that of her relations has always been sad and joyless, and yet regards the matter from an entirely universal point of view.

A very noble character we always imagine with a certain trace of quiet sadness, which is anything but a constant fretfulness at daily annoyances (this would be an ignoble trait, and lead us to fear a bad disposition), but is a consciousness derived from knowledge of the vanity of all possessions, of the suffering of all life, not merely of his own. But such knowledge may primarily be awakened by the personal experience of suffering, especially some one great sorrow, as a single unfulfilled wish brought Petrarch to that state of resigned sadness concerning the whole of life which appeals to us so pathetically in his works; for the Daphne he pursued had to flee from his hands in order to leave him, instead of herself, the immortal laurel. When through some such great and irrevocable denial of fate the will is to some extent broken, almost nothing else is desired, and the character shows itself mild, just, noble, and resigned. When, finally, grief has no definite object, but extends itself over the whole of life, then it is

to a certain extent a going into itself, a withdrawal, a gradual disappearance of the will, whose visible manifestation, the body, it imperceptibly but surely undermines, so that a man feels a certain loosening of his bonds, a mild foretaste of that death which promises to be the abolition at once of the body and of the will. Therefore a secret pleasure accompanies this grief, and it is this, as I believe, which the most melancholy of all nations has called "the joy of grief." But here also lies the danger of *sentimentality*, both in life itself and in the representation of it in poetry; when a man is always mourning and lamenting without courageously rising to resignation. In this way we lose both earth and heaven, and retain merely a watery sentimentality. Only if suffering assumes the form of pure knowledge, and this, acting as a *quieter of the will*, brings about resignation, is it worthy of reverence. In this regard, however, we feel a certain respect at the sight of every great sufferer which is akin to the feeling excited by virtue and nobility of character, and also seems like a reproach of our own happy condition. We cannot help regarding every sorrow, both our own and those of others, as at least a potential advance towards virtue and holiness, and, on the contrary, pleasures and worldly satisfactions as a retrogression from them. This goes so far, that every man who endures a great bodily or mental suffering, indeed every one who merely performs some physical labour which demands the greatest exertion, in the sweat of his brow and with evident exhaustion, yet with patience and without murmuring, every such man, I say, if we consider him with close attention, appears to us like a sick man who tries a painful cure, and who willingly, and even with satisfaction, endures the suffering it causes him, because he knows that the more he suffers the more the cause of his disease is affected, and that therefore the present suffering is the measure of his cure.

According to what has been said, the denial of the will to live, which is just what is called absolute, entire resignation, or holiness, always proceeds from that quieter of the will which the knowledge of its inner conflict and essential vanity, expressing themselves in the suffering of all living things, becomes. The difference, which we have represented as two paths, consists in

whether that knowledge is called up by suffering which is merely and purely *known*, and is freely appropriated by means of the penetration of the *principium individuationis*, or by suffering which is directly *felt* by a man himself. True salvation, deliverance from life and suffering, cannot even be imagined without complete denial of the will. Till then, every one is simply this will itself, whose manifestation is an ephemeral existence, a constantly vain and empty striving, and the world full of suffering we have represented, to which all irrevocably and in like manner belong. For we found above that life is always assured to the will to live, and its one real form is the present, from which they can never escape, since birth and death reign in the phenomenal world. The Indian mythus expresses this by saying "they are born again." The great ethical difference of character means this, that the bad man is infinitely far from the attainment of the knowledge from which the denial of the will proceeds, and therefore he is in truth *actually* exposed to all the miseries which appear in life as *possible;* for even the present fortunate condition of his personality is merely a phenomenon produced by the *principium individuationis*, and a delusion of Mâyâ, the happy dream of a beggar. The sufferings which in the vehemence and ardour of his will he inflicts upon others are the measure of the suffering, the experience of which in his own person cannot break his will, and plainly lead it to the denial of itself. All true and pure love, on the other hand, and even all free justice, proceed from the penetration of the *principium individuationis*, which, if it appears with its full power, results in perfect sanctification and salvation, the phenomenon of which is the state of resignation described above, the unbroken peace which accompanies it, and the greatest delight in death.

FRIEDRICH EDUARD BENEKE

(1798–1854)

THE NATURAL SYSTEM OF MORALS

Translated from the German by*

BENJAMIN RAND

THIRD CHAPTER. AN EXPOSITION OF THE FUNDAMENTAL NORMS OF MORALS

From our previous reflections it has become probable that the moral demands and interests proceed in some way from the so-called natural ones, that is to say from those pertaining to good and evil, as the elements in which they have their origin; and also that the universal validity and necessity which characterize these moral demands and interests might already be in some way present in the latter and from them be transferred to the former. It has at the same time become evident to us that the necessity, such as becomes valid for the moral demands, is in no wise incompatible with the relativity of good and evil, but rather is immediately connected with this; since those necessary demands relate directly to the gradation of good and evil. As the fundamental presupposition, therefore, of the moral demands and interests, there appeared a gradation of good and evil which is universally valid and as such is necessarily imposed. A result which furthermore harmonized entirely with the foregoing is, that the ethical character of conduct is determined by the form of the motives, not indeed by the logical form of universality, but by that of the practical demands in human affairs. But we were previously unable to demonstrate this gradation of good and evil; since existing psychology in no wise offered a means for the solution of such a fundamental problem. We have therefore first of all had to supply this means by a general survey of practical devel-

* From F. E. Beneke's *Grundlinien des naturlichen Systemes der praktischen Philosophie*, Berlin, 1837, Bd. I.

opments and of the knowledge gained concerning the way in which this gradation originated. Equipped therewith we resume the interrupted investigation.

Whoever examines his moral consciousness, unconstrained and unbiassed by the prejudices of systems, can have no doubt that the moral demand does not oppose natural feeling and aspiration, but on the contrary entirely accepts and confirms them as its underlying criteria. As previously remarked, the moral law never requires us immediately and without further consideration to regard a good as an evil, but only in so far as the attainment of this good stands in the way of the attainment of a higher good. Furthermore the moral law also never requires us immediately and without further consideration to strive for an evil as a good, but only in so far as it is absolutely necessary for the avoidance of a greater evil, or for the attainment of a greater good. The moral law never exacts the sacrifice of a greater for a lesser good unless this latter is outweighed by some still greater good. The moral demand reveals itself therefore as in entire harmony with the natural demands. But it does enjoin upon us not to ascribe too high a value to any good or evil, and to esteem all things in accordance with their true worth, always taking our conduct into account. We should call that man morally faultless who should have made a correct valuation of everything that can become the object of human interest and action, and who should feel, know, and will nothing higher and nothing lower than as it is determined by this valuation. The proper form of desire therefore harmonizes with its proper content; or is rather to be found where this is. The pursuit of the universal good, as measured quite impartially in accordance with a true assessment of values, and controlled by fundamental motives, might be esteemed without qualification as the characteristic of morality.

But what is true or right, and what (as immediately connected therewith) is the universal and necessary valuation of good and evil? In conformity with what has just been said we should here in the first place reply: it is that which proceeds from and is conditioned by the fundamental essence of human nature.[1] The

[1] The stoical principle to live in conformity with nature rested therefore in every instance upon a true and deep natural instinct.

moral demands are thoroughly in harmony with the natural, if these are regarded in their original purity. Or, (regarding this important relation from still another point of view), the moral commands, however ideal they may be, are nevertheless given to us as natural products of the human spirit. The soul therefore, by virtue of its deepest nature, must contain in itself the principles underlying these commands. But what are these principles?

First of all we must prepare for the positive presentation of such principles by a negative description, since in conformity with the more highly developed moral consciousness, which is itself aware of this higher development, we must be on our guard against a conception of human nature that is in any way too narrow. Heretofore this has been the fault more or less of all those who have postulated the standard of goods as the fundamental rule, or have set up the universal good as the principle of morality. From this circumstance also is to be explained in large part the opposition which this principle has encountered from the higher moral consciousness; and quite rightly when we consider the manner in which it has been set up.

That the moral consciousness cannot be reduced to an egoistic weighing of interests, either in reference to the individual, or even in reference to the state, which is also but an individual in a group, is so evident as scarcely to need refutation. So far as such a refutation may be still useful to-day, it has already been made by us.[1] We have shown that the actual limitation to that which is beneficial or injurious to us is decidedly to be rejected as unmoral; and that the theory which rests upon the view that the advantage and disadvantage of others can nevertheless have influence upon us only in so far as it is felt within us, and is therefore always our own or a selfish interest, is based upon a psychological error, which can be demonstrated with the greatest certainty. Our own or a selfish interest is only what is felt or desired in the group of ideas by which we become conscious of ourselves; what on the other hand is felt or desired in the group of ideas which refer to others is projected by us into their souls, and

[1] *System der praktischen Philosophie*, p. 80.

therefore is an interest regarded as unselfish. We have no egoistically limited relation, but on the contrary an enlargement of our being toward others, and an absorption of the being of these others in our own, in such a way, however, that we esteem their being for its own sake and independently of all regard to ourselves. The more highly developed moral consciousness demands this altruism with unquestioned authority. The advancement of the welfare of others is to be regarded as on an equal footing with our own; for in actuality or according to its nature it is on the same footing with ours, and only when we desire and seek its advancement in the same degree with our own do we therefore regard it in a practically true or right way.

Concerning the error of another limitation there can likewise hardly be any doubt. It is the error of those who try to reduce the moral consciousness to the valuation of sensuous pleasure. Man is indeed a sensuous being, but he is also an intellectual being; and the intellectual is so decidedly the higher that it is a scarcely conceivable perversion of the true relation to try to make the sensuous the higher. This perversion of the true relation is so great that as a matter of fact we can scarcely point out a philosopher who has really taught this, and has affirmed the sensuous pleasure to be the highest good. At most the system of the younger Aristippus might possibly have contained this doctrine. It was without doubt entirely foreign to the elder Aristippus and to Epicurus, to whom it is frequently ascribed; on the contrary, we find in them the most definite declarations that the intellectual pleasure is much higher and more enduring than the sensuous.

The reason why these writers and so many others like them have failed is owing to a third limitation in the conception of human nature: to wit, they took into consideration for the construction of good and evil only sensations or conditions, that is, conscious developments, and omitted the developments of the unconscious life of the soul, or inner characteristics, such as talents, capacities, attainments, and peculiarities of disposition and character of every kind. In our general survey we have already become acquainted with a large number of such char-

acteristics, and with very diversified tendencies which are directed toward these unconscious developments. The more highly developed moral consciousness cannot be in doubt as to how we should rank these two types of psychical existence with relation to their value. The permanent has incontestably a higher value than the transitory; therefore that which has developed as the inner essence of the soul has a higher value than mere sensations or conditions. This has been recognized, moreover, by all philosophical thinkers who have made perfection the principle of morals, as for instance in antiquity especially the Stoics, and in modern times the Wolfian School. That these philosophers did not convince their opponents, and that their erroneous view has been exploited ever anew up to our own time,[1] may very well be due chiefly to the previously mentioned difficulty of representing and of characterizing the inner essence of the soul with clearness and definiteness. It was not to be wondered at, but was even in some degree necessary, that those who had been accustomed to regard clearness and definiteness of thought everywhere as the highest criterion, or the *conditio sine qua non* of scientific knowledge, should interpret whatever was not possible to be known, as non-existent. It was with a certain measure of justice that they would not content themselves with an appeal to those obscure presentations and feelings beyond which the defenders of the correct theory were unable to go. Thus we find them returning ever anew with a kind of passionate zeal to the establishment of a standard based upon pleasant and unpleasant sensations, since if they were compelled to sacrifice either one, they preferred to give up those obscure moral sensations, rather than the demand for thoroughgoing scientific clearness. We are now, however, for the first time, by means of our more perfect psychological construction, in a position to free ourselves entirely from this disability, and to establish with full clearness and distinctness the true valuation.

But in order to secure the universal recognition of this deeper construction we have still to contend with one very considerable difficulty, and that is the lack of suitable language for the designa-

[1] Most recently by Bentham.

tion of these fundamental moral relations. Here too philosophy unfortunately has no other language for the expression of its deeper insight than that of common life, that is to say, than that which has been formed for the superficial knowledge which belongs to ordinary unscientific thinking. But in common speech there are no words which express the developments of human nature in the full compass just mentioned; or which designate fully the psychical advancements as well as the physical; those of other human beings, even all mankind, as well as of one's own person; and the acquisitions and enhancements of the inner characteristics and perfections as well as of the agreeable sensations and conditions. Most writers (formerly including even myself) have used the terms "desire" (*Lust*) and "aversion" (*Unlust*). These have, however, a twofold and very marked deficiency; first that in their most general use they recall the physical, whereas here the most highly psychical (the intellectual, moral, religious, etc.) come likewise into consideration; and secondly that they are manifestly limited to the conscious developments and to transitory states. The words "pleasure" (*Vergnugen*) and "pain" (*Schmerz*) are open to the same objections, and have besides still more special meanings. The words "good" (*Gut*) and "evil" (*Uebel*) likewise call to mind for the most part only those occurrences which determine our states either of well-being or of ill-feeling, although the original demarcation of these concepts was indeed more inclusive. But moral science has a decided need of words to express those fundamental relations of human experience in their entire scope. In my opinion, the words "enhance" (*steigern*) and "depress" (*herabstimmen*), "promote" (*fördern*) and "inhibit" (*hemmen*), are the most universal which common speech possesses for these fundamental relations, and so I shall myself employ them in what follows, although possibly some objections might be made even to them. Meanwhile I once more repeat the explanation that in their use I understand the psychical enhancements and depressions no less than the physical; those of other human beings regarded independently and for themselves no less than those of our own selves; and those of

[1] Beneke's *Grundlegung zur Physik der Sitten*, 1822.

the inner essence of the soul no less than those of the conscious developments.

Our task is to determine the true value or gradation of the enhancements and depressions, the promotions and the inhibitions, to the full extent set forth; and to show in what way this estimation or gradation is grounded universally and necessarily in the inmost essence of the human soul. For the true estimate of values lying at the foundation of the moral demands is given to us as a natural product of the human soul. It must therefore somehow coincide with the deepest constitution of our being, or indeed, if not innate or preformed (which we have deemed inadmissible [1]) be at least predetermined. What this moral law affirms to be higher must in some manner permit of proof as the natural (of course the psychically-natural) higher, or as that which must develop with every higher valuation and striving according to the natural laws of the evolution of human existence.

It is evident, therefore, that we in no wise intend to undertake a universally valid gradation of good and evil at the outset. Our task is rather merely to prove the existence of such a gradation, by showing how it arises in each man independently of any intended assistance of his, whenever he fully and genuinely develops in himself the enhancements and depressions in question. When higher and lower appear in juxtaposition, the higher reveals itself as the higher, the lower as the lower, immediately, one might even say instinctively. It is true this does not always occur, nor in the case of all men; for that development does not always ensue perfectly and genuinely. Concerning this gradation a strife will therefore arise such as we see both in life and in science in only too many instances. Under these circumstances the task of justifying this gradation is incumbent upon science; since, as conceived by the common consciousness, it cannot justify itself, or, in other words, cannot raise into a clear and definite consciousness what is instinctive and obscure, and for this reason uncertain and problematical, and thus secure itself against all scepticism.

But in what way can science solve this problem? Its procedure

[1] Beneke's *Grundlinien der Sittenlehre*, pp. 32 ff. and 65 ff.

in this matter is precisely the same as that which mathematics observes in its proofs. Take for example the well-known Pythagorean proposition. Suppose that we asked a number of persons who were still unaware of the relation, for an immediate comparison of the square upon the hypothenuse with the squares upon the two sides; it might then appear probable to one, that the two smaller squares taken together are greater; to another, on the contrary, that the greater square is larger than the other two taken together; or a third would perhaps believe that they were equal in size. But what do we do? We divide the figures by certain auxiliary lines into constituent parts which make possible an immediately safe and exact comparison; and in virtue of this, every one who will follow through these mathematical constructions is thereby absolutely compelled to recognize the equality.

Here also we proceed in precisely the same way. We desire to demonstrate the true determined gradation of good and evil, or, what after our previous discussion is the same, a gradation based upon the nature of the human soul according to its inmost constitution. In this case one understands one thing, and another understands something else. What shall we do? Good and evil are revealed in certain valuations and tendencies: but these are products of the coöperation of a greater or lesser number of fundamental psychical constituents. Into these fundamental constituents, therefore, we are compelled to resolve those valuations and tendencies. What in the immediate comparison of the latter appears as uncertain and doubtful, will now, if we compare the simple factors with one another, instead of those manifoldly complex products, admit of being traced with a clearness and definiteness, which, exactly as in the proof of mathematical propositions, brings irresistible conviction to those who enter unreservedly upon this construction.

And it is just here that psychology reveals itself as the underlying science of morals; or, (if the expression may be permitted), as the mathematics of morals. Throughout its dissection of moral phenomena it presents nothing that is in the least new, and nothing that has not from the outset existed in the moral consciousness. If it attempted to do this, it would indeed be

untrue, as it would falsify the moral consciousness by the introduction of something foreign to it. But it teaches us to view in a scientific consciousness, that is, in all parts clearly and definitely, what the ordinary moral consciousness contains and expresses in the immediately given synthesis, and for that very reason, obscurely and indefinitely. In other words, in order to characterize the process more exactly, it teaches us to view these things in their simple constituents, which, for the very reason that they are simple, permit a thoroughly clear statement compelling universal acceptance.

What now are these simple elements in the calculus relating to good and evil things, (such as sensations, ideas of worth, tendencies, etc.)? We have indicated them in the previous section. They are upon the one hand the elementary faculties of the human soul in and for itself, when as yet it is indifferent as regards a theoretical or practical development; and upon the other hand external impressions. By the united effect of both these constituents all practical developments originate in precisely the same manner as those belonging to the acquisition of knowledge. Even up to the most complicated and more remote inclinations, everything is, as we are convinced, formed from these two elements: the tendencies and inner evaluating principles proceeding from the elementary faculties, and the objective relations or the material proceeding from impressions. But the united action of these two classes of constituents can take place in various relations. If we attempt to characterize these relations more definitely, there result five fundamental moments or, as they may be termed, practical categories, to which all relations of gradation in good and evil may be referred. They are:

I. The nature of the elementary faculties.

II. The development of the various elementary faculties through impressions.

III. The grade of multiplicity in the elementary products formed in this way.

IV. The duration of these products.

V. The purity of these products.

Wherever we make the affirmation that one good or evil accord-

ing to the true (universally valid and moral) value is greater or less than another, we must justify this affirmation with reference to one or more of these five moments. The fundamental problem involved, is to determine the practical truth of sensations, valuations, tendencies; and the five moments designated are basal for these. If we affirm, therefore, that a sensation, valuation, or tendency directed towards one certain good in conformity with practical truth, must be a higher product than that directed towards another good, we must produce the proof for this affirmation by an appeal to these moments. If the moral gradation is a product of human nature, it must be derivable wholly from the fundamental relations thereof.

We now take up these moments in succession, pointing out specifically under each of them their most universal and important consequences.

I. *The nature of the elementary faculties.*

When we compare the elementary faculties of the various fundamental systems of human existence with one another, psychological analysis reveals a constant gradation in reference to the strength with which they receive, assimilate, and elaborate the external impressions. Naturally the greater this strength, the more complete must be the products, and the more perfectly must these products persist in the inner essence of the soul, and enter as constituents into later developments. Moreover, one must realize that this relation exhibits itself as active from the first moment of life, and that for this reason the efficiency of the elementary products must very soon be increased a thousandfold and ten thousandfold. Hence the extraordinary variety of results which the different fundamental systems of human existence permit in the further course of their development. If one scrutinizes all the sciences relating to external nature, one will find nine tenths or even more of their predicates refer to visible qualities. Why is this? Is there not in the world just as much to hear, to smell, to taste, and to touch, as there is to see? Why, then, have we not developed from the qualities made perceptible through the other senses as many scientific concepts, and upon the basis of these as much scientific knowledge? And why not

just as clear and definite knowledge? The fundamental apprehension of objects is entirely the same with the one as with the others. If we designate the sense of vision as objective, there is not the least ground for designating the remaining senses as subjective. On the contrary, it is probably the case that sight with its greater activity incorporates in its apprehension of objects rather more than less of the elements or forms belonging to itself (and thus subjective). Whence, therefore, comes the great preference here indicated for the products of the sense of sight? It is merely owing to the greater vigor of its elementary faculties. By this means the impressions of objects are seized, retained, and reproduced more powerfully even in the first sensations, and consequently enter likewise more deeply into the later perceptions, memories, and imaginations accompanying them, as well as into the processes of abstraction. In this way, as already remarked, that preference which originally appears insignificant must soon become increased a thousandfold and culminate in the designated relation.[1] But this preference holds not only for the intellectual, but also for the practical development. If in the former respect we style the senses of sight and of hearing higher, and the others lower senses, in the latter respect we designate the first as nobler, and the second as meaner senses; and we also affirm that in the moral sphere every man must prefer the pleasurable sensation of the nobler senses (other things being equal) to a pleasurable sensation of the lower senses, to say nothing of the rudimentary feelings (of heat, etc.). Why is this? Simply because the elementary faculties involved in the first possess greater vigor, and consequently the entire act must receive thereby greater intensification. Whoever, therefore, normally cultivates both kinds of pleasurable sensations must develop them in this relation of higher and lower intensity. The preference exacted by the moral demands is none other than the natural, or that conditioned by the real essence of the human soul. It is precisely the same also with reference to the sensations of aversion (*Unlust*). We demand that the sensations of aversion connected with the sense of taste or of smell should be regarded by every one as lower

[1] Beneke's *Psychologische Skizzen*, Bd. II. pp. 166 ff. and X. 299 ff.

than those of the nobler senses, and the disturbances or dangers which befall the mere bodily existence as still lower. This is true because in conformity with the fundamental norm of human nature, the energy of the elementary faculties gets lower and lower as you descend to these systems, and as a consequence the sensations connected with them, if they are normally formed, must be formed on a lower scale.

II. *The development of the various elementary faculties through the impressions.*

The general fundamental relation is very simple. The more complete this development, the higher are the increase and the value of what is represented thereby. This finds its application in a great number of more special relationships.

An appropriately fulfilled or realized elementary faculty is to be valued higher than the same faculty while it is still unfulfilled, *i. e.*, mere capacity, mere power. The unfulfilled elementary faculties strive for realization. For instance, the elementary faculties of the sense of sight seek for the stimulation of light, those of the sense of hearing for the stimulation of sound, etc., inasmuch as they have not as yet attained their destiny, their completed existence. Only the fulfilment, and the development conditioned by it, give to them the full reality of which they are capable, and these we must certainly regard as good things. The same relation holds true also in reference to all developed powers or faculties, in so far as the development of these into states of activity (or manifestations of power) depends upon an enhancement due to the transference either of impulses or of capacities. A power habitually used, whether of memory, of understanding, of fancy, or of meditation, is therefore to be valued higher than one unused, just because the former possesses by comparison with the latter a more enhanced psychical existence. For this reason we regard it a reproach against any one to say, he has permitted his faculties to remain unused. In the moral judgment, use of a faculty is higher, because use is naturally (psychically) higher. We can proceed even a step further. In every act of becoming conscious, a part of the elements of consciousness employed becomes permanently assimilated, and the inner capacity or power returns

enriched to the extent of these into the unconscious being.[1] The result therefore is that the value even of the powers (*Anlagen*), themselves, increases in the measure of the frequency of their use; or that a much used capacity is (other things being equal) of higher worth than one little used.

A further result is that every excitation or fulfilment of function is the more valuable the more enhanced it is, except indeed it be excessive. The fully adequate excitation, which forms the basis of the clear perception, or of the gratifying sensation, is consequently to be preferred to the inadequate stimulant or excitation of aversion (*Unlust*); and the excitation of desire (*Lust*), regarded at least for itself, is to be preferred to the merely adequate (or the ordinary mean) excitation.

Furthermore, as pain is a greater evil than aversion and ennui, its removal is also a greater good. For pain as the result immediately following upon an over-excitement directly causes a weakening, and even in many cases the destruction of the powers affected by it; but aversion does so more rarely and more slowly; ennui never, at least immediately.

The satisfaction of the stimulus or gratification is a good, so much the greater as the need was greater or more pressing. Consider the necessity of food to one who is dying of starvation, or even only to one who has become hungry as the result of continued activity and exertion. There is a greater difference between the unrealized and the realized elementary faculties than in the other cases. It is therefore better to feed the hungry than those who are not hungry; and this also is true not only of bodily, but likewise of intellectual hunger. Furthermore, the appropriate excitation or fulfilment of the elementary faculties in relation to the unrealized is a greater good than is the increase of pleasure in relation to the common, mean development. Even if the immediately given proportion of increase is the same in both cases, the results nevertheless are not similar; for the non-realization (or an imperfect realization) occasions, if not immediately, at least for the future and gradually, a deterioration of the faculty. On the other hand, in the common, mean realization,

[1] Beneke's *Psychologische Skizzen*, Bd. I. pp. 121 f.

a certain satisfaction is afforded, and the "trace" remaining from it increases the vigor. It is better to give to one who has not, than to provide an excess for one who has.

A newly acquired excitation is to be regarded in and for itself higher than one merely reproduced; the latter, however, in proportion as the reproduction is more perfect. The reproduction is most perfectly accomplished by the precisely appropriate fulfilments, such as lie at the basis of clear mental representations; and in this respect these are given a certain preference even to the excitations of pleasure, which, although they are raised higher in the immediate development, nevertheless are retained and reproduced less perfectly. The more recent mental image and sensation, the more vivid memory, the concept reproduced with more complete consciousness, etc., are of more value than the less recent, less vivid, and less fully reproduced. The withdrawal of a good is a greater evil than the non-attainment of one merely expected; the latter again is a greater evil than the non-attainment of one not expected.

III. *The grade of multiplicity in the elementary products formed in this way.*

Heretofore we have considered the most elementary products, in which indeed only a few relations of comparison could be made. With this moment a wider field is opened for comparison.

Here again the fundamental relation is very simple. Each development is of higher value in proportion to the number of its elementary constituents; for by just so much is its psychic reality more extended and will it therefore be made to contain a higher intensity.

This holds true in the first instance in regard to all relations of homogeneous multiplicity. Thought is of higher value than the particular presentation. For the concept is formed by the manifold coalescence of homogeneous elements of presentation, and in it, (and in consequence of this fact in all the developments in which it enters as a constituent), the elements of presentation are likewise manifoldly contained; whereas these exist only singly in the particular presentations. Suppose in the formation of a concept concerning the character of a natural product there were

twenty presentations of this character merged together; then the concept is developed by the fusion of the similar elements of presentation given in all these into one total act. This total act will consequently contain in itself twenty times what each particular one of these presentations added to it singly. Therefore in general we have the higher value of the psychical or of the intellectual, in comparison with the non-psychical or non-intellectual. For this reason also the higher concept has more value than the lower (in that the former contains manifoldly the presentation of the latter); the judgment (other things being equal) has more value than the concept; and the inference has more value than the judgment. The universal judgment has more value than the particular and individual; the explanation and the classification have more value than the ordinary judgments, since the former indeed arise through the coalescence of several simple judgments. Thus we might continue up to the most perfect scientific system, and we shall always have the homogeneous presentation becoming more and more manifold. Further, the more clearly a particular concept is thought, so much the higher is its value; for the degree of clearness depends precisely upon the degree of multiplicity. The clearer insight is to be preferred to the less clear, and the clearer thinking man to one of less clear thought. It is precisely similar with reference to the remaining products. Where the choice is open to us, we prefer giving a pleasure or supplying an artistic treat to the more appreciative. For they bring more homogeneous powers of feeling to the enjoyment, and consequently will have from it a higher pleasure than those who have less appreciation.

We proceed next to the heterogeneous multiplicity of the presentation. As previously we had an intensive enhancement, here we have an extensive one. The greater the number of dissimilar presentations combined in a single act, of so much the higher is its value. By this principle is determined the value of knowledge of every kind, as the value of learning, of intelligence, of cleverness. Numerous other relations are also to be mentioned here. Concepts, judgments, inferences, etc., are to be esteemed the more highly the more fruitful they are. For in the case of

concepts, fruitfulness originates from the manner in which particulars coalesce to form them; and the more particulars there are, the more intensified must be the development as a whole.

This multiplicity of the heterogeneous proves true further in reference to the relation of ends and means. The more ends that can be attained through something and the more numerous its favorable consequences, the more valuable it is; for so many more enhancements are of course united in and with it. We naturally give the preference to the more manifoldly over the less manifoldly serviceable.

Closely connected with this, is the transference of the enhancements and depressions from any one system of our being to others associated with it. For example, from it is to be derived the high value of health. Health in and for itself is related of course only to the common vital systems, that is to say, to the lowest fundamental systems of human existence. It could therefore (according to moment I) have only a small value attributed to it. But in this mundane life the psychical systems are so intimately connected with the vital systems, that the former must constantly draw sustenance from the latter, and therefore the success of all our psychical activities depends in great measure upon the degree and kind of nourishment which is imparted to them by the bodily functions. To the health of these we are thus compelled to ascribe a very high value, inasmuch as we depend upon the continued transference of their energy.

There are two other relations of this kind. The one is the union of many interests for the same individual, and the other is the union of the interests of many individuals. Wherefore is the interest of each group of mankind (of the family, of a corporation, of a nation, etc.) to be esteemed a great deal higher than the similar interests of individuals? And why is the interest of the human race to be esteemed the highest of all? Only because the precedence of humanity is occasioned by its natural relations of development, and because every one who conceives these in their true light must view them in these gradations. For the interest of a larger body of men is nothing but a multiplication of the interest of the individual. And therefore in the normal

production of sensation, thought, and volition, the interest must exhibit itself as a thing manifold in the way we have described, and accordingly by far the higher and stronger.

IV. *The duration of these products.*

The duration can be conditioned objectively, (through the character of the impressions, circumstances, relations, etc.), and also subjectively.

It is scarcely necessary to enlarge upon the objective further. The longer time a satisfaction, an enjoyment, or an opportunity to inform, to enlighten, and to instruct one's self, continues, the greater goods they become. The longer duration indeed affords more of enhancement, and must be felt, thought, and striven for, with this increase.

The subjectively conditioned duration is of greater significance, and thus needs more elucidation. From this relation there arises, as we have previously pointed out, the higher value of all inner characteristics or capacities, such as accomplishments, talents, skill, qualities of heart and character, in comparison with the individual conscious developments. Insight and clearness of mind are of more value than a single clear concept which we have formed by foreign aid, or even by ourselves accidentally; cleverness of greater value than a clever plan; a contented spirit than any piece of good fortune which can befall us; resolution and strength of character higher than any combination of circumstances which would render them unnecessary. How is this, since nevertheless, as we previously remarked, the conscious or animated being of the soul is in and of itself of higher worth than the unconscious inner essence? Simply because the objective things contain only transitory enhancements, while the subjective capacities contain permanent ones. Of course, in so far as the native capacities enter into the conscious development, this stands higher, inasmuch as in addition to the transitory, it contains at the same time the permanent. But we have here placed the inner capacities in comparison not with their own conscious developments, but with the particular or simple developments which belong to the same species. Now psychology shows that those capacities (*Anlagen*) are the product of a large number of

these developments, which have been established by means of the traces they have left. Insight and clearness of mind arise only from the traces of very many clear and correct concepts, judgments, etc.; prudence only from the traces of a great number of series of ideas, in which the relations of ends and means have been accurately reflected; a contented spirit from very many appropriate traces of products of enhancements. We have therefore psychical realities which are of greater extent and more perfect development, and which for that very reason, when they are rightly felt, thought, and pursued, must also be felt, thought, and pursued with higher intensity.

One readily perceives that this moment can in a certain measure be resolved into the earlier ones. If these capacities are to be well founded, vigorous developments created by the elementary faculties, and under appropriate conditions of excitation, must leave behind traces of appropriate perfection, and this in some way must be many times repeated. But we still have something characteristic that is not reducible to the moments previously considered, and that is the characteristic fusion, assimilation, penetration, by which these numerous traces become a total capacity, (to be sure not in all cases in the same measure). And this relation contributes not a little to the powerful persistence, or to the longer duration of the capacity.

With this problem is connected still another important relation of enhancement, which arises from the combination of the values belonging to the inner characteristics with those belonging to the transitory furtherances (or states). All enhancements thus are undoubtedly to be more highly valued according as the inner worth of the persons whom they affect is greater, and to be valued lower according as this worth is slighter. All depressions are in the former relation greater, and in the latter lesser, evils. Just as we had in the previously considered moments, additions, as it were, of elementary enhancements, so we have here in some measure a relation of multiplication. In other words, by means of the subjective factor the value of the objective is multiplied in a measure proportionate to the worth of the former. Besides every furtherance imparts force or power; every inhibition

diminishes the same. When we apportion, therefore, good to the good we pave the way for a further continued operation of the good. In the relation previously considered there results for the furtherance applied to evil something like a relation of division. The point of view just mentioned shows us still more. Through the furtherances we should in many cases increase the force or power of evil in the world; and thus, then, the furtherances of evil are in most instances to be regarded as actually evil; and the hindrances or suppression of evil as something good. Here, therefore, we have a reversal of the character of value. By the entrance of a negative quantity the whole product becomes negative, (or where a negative quantity is already present, the product becomes positive). Later we shall recognize these relations as the moral foundation for rewards and punishments.

V. *The purity of these products.*

The fundamental relation here again is very simple. If we have an enhancement that is not pure, and if there is given in addition to it a depression (whether this be accidentally or necessarily and essentially combined with it), the former becomes in this way to the same degree a good of less value; and precisely the reverse in reference to evil.

A characteristic application here follows for the relation of good and evil, whether immediately present or to be expected in the nearer or more remote future. The things of the future, moreover, may not come to pass: they are, in view of the uncertainty of earthly relations, even in the most favorable case subject to no more than the highest degree of probability. The probable, however, we postulate (and we feel and strive after accordingly), inasmuch as several series of ideas run parallel in our minds, of which one or more have as their final member the good or evil in question, and the remaining, one or more, the opposite. We have, therefore, no pure sensation or idea of this good or evil; and in precisely the measure that it is limited or impaired (neutralized by the opposite), a slighter value is to be attributed to the good; and the evil is less to be resisted.

In this way, therefore, the gradations of good and evil demanded in morals can be traced back with a high degree of certainty to

the quantitative relations given in the deepest foundations of our practical development. There has thus been confirmed beyond question what we had earlier expressed as hardly more than a supposition: that morality is by no means a thing foreign to human nature, entering into it only afterwards, or even as in opposition to it. On the contrary, the moral and the natural coincide throughout, and the moral law is in fact none other than the pure and flawless development of the deepest fundamental relations of human existence. What immediate consciousness itself reveals to the unprejudiced and clearly introspecting person, is confirmed with the greatest definiteness and certainty by a psychological analysis carried to the simplest fundamental elements; and psychology thereby proves itself to be the essential fundamental science, or a mathematics of morals. The given constructions are of such a nature that if we had a fixed fundamental standard for the psychical, all moral relations could be accurately calculated. To be sure we have no such standard and must for that reason dispense with this calculation. Nevertheless, as great definiteness and sharpness as ever can be acquired without this standard we have by means of these constructions undoubtedly attained.

We are now also in a position to present in the clearest light the nature of the necessity and universal validity which are characteristic of the moral demands, and which heretofore we have been compelled to leave in a certain obscurity. What does it mean when we say that every one must value the intellectual higher than the sensuous, the well-being of a greater community higher than one's own limited welfare? And of what nature is this universal validity, which doubtless is by no means regarded as universal? This necessity, which yet so often does not occur? We answer, the universal validity consists in the fact that the gradation we have described is actually inherent in all men in the same way, through the fundamental relations of their practical development. But besides these fundamental relations there exist other relations which can prevent and destroy this development; and if this occurs, the result is that the universal and similar native endowment is nevertheless not universally and

similarly manifested in action. And it is this also that limits necessity. Moral necessity is, to be sure, in some measure at the same time a natural necessity; and what is more, the necessity of the deepest natural relations of our practical development. But it is the necessity of the untrammelled and pure (one might say, ideal) natural development, and in so far it is indeed only a limited and conditioned necessity. Throughout all corrupting accretions, however, and in contrast to these, that original necescity of nature does for the most part assert itself, and then it becomes a moral necessity. In so far as these corrupting accretions become known to us as such, that purer development becomes a command imperative for every one who desires to be a man in the higher sense of this word, or who seeks to represent in himself the fundamental norm of human nature in its purity.

JOHN STUART MILL

(1806–1873)

UTILITARIANISM *

CHAPTER II. WHAT UTILITARIANISM IS

A PASSING remark is all that needs be given to the ignorant blunder of supposing that those who stand up for utility as the test of right and wrong, use the term in that restricted and merely colloquial sense in which utility is opposed to pleasure. An apology is due to the philosophical opponents of utilitarianism, for even the momentary appearance of confounding them with any one capable of so absurd a misconception; which is the more extraordinary, inasmuch as the contrary accusation, of referring everything to pleasure, and that too in its grossest form, is another of the common charges against utilitarianism; and, as has been pointedly remarked by an able writer, the same sort of persons, and often the very same persons, denounce the theory "as impracticably dry when the word utility precedes the word pleasure, and as too practicably voluptuous when the word pleasure precedes the word utility." Those who know anything about the matter are aware that every writer, from Epicurus to Bentham, who maintained the theory of utility, meant by it, not something to be contra-distinguished from pleasure, but pleasure itself, together with exemption from pain; and instead of opposing the useful to the agreeable or the ornamental, have always declared that the useful means these, among other things. Yet the common herd, including the herd of writers, not only in newspapers and periodicals, but in books of weight and pretension, are perpetually falling into this shallow mistake. Having caught up the word utilitarian, while knowing nothing whatever about it but its sound, they habitually express by it the rejection, or the neglect, of pleasure in some of its forms; of beauty, of ornament, or of amusement. Nor is the term thus ignorantly misapplied

* London, 1863; 12th ed. 1895.

solely in disparagement, but occasionally in compliment; as though it implied superiority to frivolity and the mere pleasures of the moment. And this perverted use is the only one in which the word is popularly known, and the one from which the new generation are acquiring their sole notion of its meaning. Those who introduced the word, but who had for many years discontinued it as a distinctive appellation, may well feel themselves called upon to resume it, if by doing so they can hope to contribute anything towards rescuing it from this utter degradation.[1]

The creed which accepts as the foundation of morals, Utility, or the Greatest Happiness Principle, holds that actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness. By happiness is intended pleasure, and the absence of pain; by unhappiness, pain, and the privation of pleasure. To give a clear view of the moral standard set up by the theory, much more requires to be said; in particular what things it includes in the ideas of pain and pleasure; and to what extent this is left an open question. But these supplementary explanations do not affect the theory of life on which this theory of morality is grounded, — namely, that pleasure, and freedom from pain, are the only things desirable as ends; and that all desirable things (which are as numerous in the utilitarian as in any other scheme) are desirable either for the pleasure inherent in themselves, or as means to the promotion of pleasure and the prevention of pain.

Now, such a theory of life excites in many minds, and among them in some of the most estimable in feeling and purpose, inveterate dislike. To suppose that life has (as they express it) no higher end than pleasure, — no better and nobler object of desire and pursuit, — they designate as utterly mean and grovel-

[1] The author of this essay has reason for believing himself to be the first person who brought the word utilitarian into use. He did not invent it, but adapted it from a passing expression in Mr. Galt's *Annals of the Parish*. After using it as a designation for several years, he and others abandoned it from a growing dislike to anything resembling a badge or watchword of sectarian distinction. But as a name for one single opinion, not a set of opinions, — to denote the recognition of utility as a standard, not any particular way of applying it, — the term supplies a want in the language, and offers, in many cases, a convenient mode of avoiding tiresome circumlocution.

ling; as a doctrine worthy only of swine, to whom the followers of Epicurus were, at a very early period, contemptuously likened; and modern holders of the doctrine are occasionally made the subject of equally polite comparisons by its German, French, and English assailants.

When thus attacked, the Epicureans have always answered, that it is not they, but their accusers, who represent human nature in a degrading light; since the accusation supposes human beings to be capable of no pleasures except those of which swine are capable. If this supposition were true, the charge could not be gainsaid, but would then be no longer an imputation; for if the sources of pleasure were precisely the same to human beings and to swine, the rule of life which is good enough for the one would be good enough for the other. The comparison of the Epicurean life to that of beasts is felt as degrading, precisely because a beast's pleasures do not satisfy a human being's conceptions of happiness. Human beings have faculties more elevated than the animal appetites, and when once made conscious of them, do not regard anything as happiness which does not include their gratification. I do not indeed, consider the Epicureans to have been by any means faultless in drawing out their scheme of consequences from the utilitarian principle. To do this in any sufficient manner, many Stoic, as well as Christian elements require to be included. But there is no known Epicurean theory of life which does not assign to the pleasures of the intellect, of the feelings and imagination, and of the moral sentiments, a much higher value as pleasures than to those of mere sensation. It must be admitted, however, that utilitarian writers in general have placed the superiority of mental over bodily pleasures chiefly in the greater permanency, safety, uncostliness, etc., of the former, — that is, in their circumstantial advantages rather than in their intrinsic nature. And on all these points utilitarians have fully proved their case; but they might have taken the other, and, as it may be called, higher ground, with entire consistency. It is quite compatible with the principle of utility to recognize the fact, that some *kinds* of pleasure are more desirable and more valuable than others. It would be absurd that

while, in estimating all other things, quality is considered as well as quantity, the estimation of pleasure should be supposed to depend on quantity alone.

If I am asked what I mean by difference of quality in pleasures, or what makes one pleasure more valuable than another, merely as a pleasure, except its being greater in amount, there is but one possible answer. Of two pleasures, if there be one to which all or almost all who have experience of both give a decided preference, irrespective of any feeling of moral obligation to prefer it, that is the more desirable pleasure. If one of the two is, by those who are competently acquainted with both, placed so far above the other that they prefer it, even though knowing it to be attended with a greater amount of discontent, and would not resign it for any quantity of the other pleasure which their nature is capable of, we are justified in ascribing to the preferred enjoyment a superiority in quality, so far outweighing quantity as to render it, in comparison, of small account.

Now it is an unquestionable fact that those who are equally acquainted with, and equally capable of appreciating and enjoying both, do give a most marked preference to the manner of existence which employs their higher faculties. Few human creatures would consent to be changed into any of the lower animals, for a promise of the fullest allowance of a beast's pleasures; no intelligent human being would consent to be a fool, no instructed person would be an ignoramus, no person of feeling and conscience would be selfish and base, even though they should be persuaded that the fool, the dunce, or the rascal is better satisfied with his lot than they are with theirs. They would not resign what they possess more than he, for the most complete satisfaction of all the desires which they have in common with him. If they ever fancy they would, it is only in cases of unhappiness so extreme, that to escape from it they would exchange their lot for almost any other, however undesirable in their own eyes. A being of higher faculties requires more to make him happy, is capable probably of more acute suffering, and is certainly accessible to it at more points, than one of an inferior type; but in spite of these liabilities, he can never really wish

to sink into what he feels to be a lower grade of existence. We may give what explanation we please of this unwillingness; we may attribute it to pride, a name which is given indiscriminately to some of the most and to some of the least estimable feelings of which mankind are capable; we may refer it to the love of liberty and personal independence, an appeal to which was with the Stoics one of the most effective means for the inculcation of it; to the love of power, or to the love of excitement, both of which do really enter into and contribute to it; but its most appropriate appellation is a sense of dignity, which all human beings possess in one form or other, and in some, though by no means in exact, proportion to their higher faculties, and which is so essential a part of the happiness of those in whom it is strong, that nothing which conflicts with it could be, otherwise than momentarily, an object of desire to them. Whoever supposes that this preference takes place at a sacrifice of happiness — that the superior being, in anything like equal circumstances, is not happier than the inferior — confounds the two very different ideas, of happiness and content. It is indisputable that the being whose capacities of enjoyment are low, has the greatest chance of having them fully satisfied; and a highly endowed being will always feel that any happiness which he can look for as the world is constituted, is imperfect. But he can learn to bear its imperfections, if they are at all bearable; and they will not make him envy the being who is indeed unconscious of the imperfections, but only because he feels not at all the good which those imperfections qualify. It is better to be a human being dissatisfied than a pig satisfied; better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied. And if the fool, or the pig, is of a different opinion, it is because they only know their own side of the question. The other party to the comparison knows both sides.

It may be objected, that many who are capable of the higher pleasures, occasionally, under the influence of temptation, postpone them to the lower. But this is quite compatible with a full appreciation of the intrinsic superiority of the higher. Men often, from infirmity of character, make their election for the nearer good, though they know it to be the less valuable; and this

no less when the choice is between two bodily pleasures, than when it is between bodily and mental. They pursue sensual indulgences to the injury of health, though perfectly aware that health is the greater good. It may be further objected, that many who begin with youthful enthusiasm for everything noble, as they advance in years sink into indolence and selfishness. But I do not believe that those who undergo this very common change, voluntarily choose the lower description of pleasures in preference to the higher. I believe that before they devote themselves exclusively to the one, they have already become incapable of the other. Capacity for the nobler feelings is in most natures a very tender plant, easily killed, not only by hostile influences, but by mere want of sustenance; and in the majority of young persons it speedily dies away if the occupation to which their position in life has devoted them, and the society into which it has thrown them, are not favorable to keeping that higher capacity in exercise. Men lose their high aspirations as they lose their intellectual tastes, because they have not time or opportunity for indulging them; and they addict themselves to inferior pleasures, not because they deliberately prefer them, but because they are either the only ones to which they have access, or the only ones which they are any longer capable of enjoying. It may be questioned whether any one who has remained equally susceptible to both classes of pleasures, ever knowingly and calmly preferred the lower; though many, in all ages, have broken down in an ineffectual attempt to combine both.

From this verdict of the only competent judges, I apprehend there can be no appeal. On a question which is the best worth having of two pleasures, or which of two modes of existence is the most grateful to the feelings, apart from its moral attributes and from its consequences, the judgment of those who are qualified by knowledge of both, or, if they differ, that of the majority among them, must be admitted as final. And there needs be the less hesitation to accept this judgment respecting the quality of pleasures, since there is no other tribunal to be referred to even on the question of quantity. What means are there of determining which is the acutest of two pains, or the intensest of

two pleasurable sensations, except the general suffrage of those who are familiar with both? Neither pains nor pleasures are homogeneous, and pain is always heterogeneous with pleasure. What is there to decide whether a particular pleasure is worth purchasing at the cost of a particular pain, except the feelings and judgment of the experienced? When, therefore, those feelings and judgment declare the pleasures derived from the higher faculties to be preferable *in kind*, apart from the question of intensity, to those of which the animal nature, disjoined from the higher faculties, is susceptible, they are entitled on this subject to the same regard.

I have dwelt on this point, as being a necessary part of a perfectly just conception of Utility or Happiness, considered as the directive rule of human conduct. But it is by no means an indispensable condition to the acceptance of the utilitarian standard; for that standard is not the agent's own greatest happiness, but the greatest amount of happiness altogether; and if it may possibly be doubted whether a noble character is always the happier for its nobleness, there can be no doubt that it makes other people happier, and that the world in general is immensely a gainer by it. Utilitarianism, therefore, could only attain its end by the general cultivation of nobleness of character, even if each individual were only benefited by the nobleness of others, and his own, so far as happiness is concerned, were a sheer deduction from the benefit. But the bare enunciation of such an absurdity as this last, renders refutation superfluous.

According to the Greatest Happiness Principle, as above explained, the ultimate end, with reference to and for the sake of which all other things are desirable (whether we are considering our own good or that of other people), is an existence exempt as far as possible from pain, and as rich as possible in enjoyments, both in point of quantity and quality; the test of quality, and the rule for measuring it against quantity, being the preference felt by those who, in their opportunities of experience, to which must be added their habits of self-consciousness and self-observation, are best furnished with the means of comparison. This being, according to the utilitarian opinion, the end

of human action, is necessarily also the standard of morality; which may accordingly be defined, the rules and precepts for human conduct, by the observance of which an existence such as has been described might be, to the greatest extent possible, secured to all mankind; and not to them only, but, so far as the nature of things admits, to the whole sentient creation.

Against this doctrine, however, rises another class of objectors, who say that happiness, in any form, cannot be the rational purpose of human life and action; because, in the first place, it is unattainable; and they contemptuously ask, What right hast thou to be happy? a question which Mr. Carlyle clinches by the addition, What right, a short time ago, hadst thou even *to be?* Next, they say that men can do *without* happiness; that all noble human beings have felt this, and could not have become noble but by learning the lesson of Entsagen, or renunciation; which lesson, thoroughly learned and submitted to, they affirm to be the beginning and necessary condition of all virtue.

The first of these objections would go to the root of the matter, were it well founded; for if no happiness is to be had at all by human beings, the attainment of it cannot be the end of morality, or of any rational conduct. Though, even in that case, something might still be said for the utilitarian theory; since utility includes not solely the pursuit of happiness, but the prevention or mitigation of unhappiness; and if the former aim be chimerical, there will be all the greater scope and more imperative need for the latter, so long, at least, as mankind think fit to live, and do not take refuge in the simultaneous act of suicide recommended under certain conditions by Novalis. When, however, it is thus positively asserted to be impossible that human life should be happy, the assertion, if not something like a verbal quibble, is at least an exaggeration. If by happiness be meant a continuity of highly pleasurable excitement, it is evident enough that this is impossible. A state of exalted pleasure lasts only moments, or in some cases, and with some intermissions, hours or days, and is the occasional brilliant flash of enjoyment, not its permanent and steady flame. Of this the philosophers who have taught that happiness is the end of life were as fully aware as those who

taunt them. The happiness which they meant was not a life of rapture; but moments of such, in an existence made up of few and transitory pains, many and various pleasures, with a decided predominance of the active over the passive, and having as the foundation of the whole, not to expect more from life than it is capable of bestowing. A life thus composed, to those who have been fortunate enough to obtain it, has always appeared worthy of the name of happiness. And such an existence is even now the lot of many, during some considerable portion of their lives. The present wretched education, and wretched social arrangements, are the only real hindrance to its being attainable by almost all.

The objectors perhaps may doubt whether human beings, if taught to consider happiness as the end of life, would be satisfied with such a moderate share of it. But great numbers of mankind have been satisfied with much less. The main constituents of a satisfied life appear to be two, either of which by itself is often found sufficient for the purpose: tranquillity and excitement. With much tranquillity, many find that they can be content with very little pleasure; with much excitement, many can reconcile themselves to a considerable quantity of pain. There is assuredly no inherent impossibility in enabling even the mass of mankind to unite both; since the two are so far from being incompatible that they are in natural alliance, the prolongation of either being a preparation for, and exciting a wish for, the other. It is only those in whom indolence amounts to a vice, that do not desire excitement after an interval of repose; it is only those in whom the need of excitement is a disease, that feel the tranquillity which follows excitement dull and insipid, instead of pleasurable in direct proportion to the excitement which preceded it. When people who are tolerably fortunate in their outward lot do not find in life sufficient enjoyment to make it valuable to them, the cause generally is, caring for nobody but themselves. To those who have neither public nor private affections, the excitements of life are much curtailed, and in any case dwindle in value as the time approaches when all selfish interests must be terminated by death; while those who leave after them objects of

personal affection, and especially those who have also cultivated a fellow-feeling with the collective interests of mankind, retain as lively an interest in life on the eve of death as in the vigour of youth and health. Next to selfishness, the principal cause which makes life unsatisfactory is want of mental cultivation. A cultivated mind — I do not mean that of a philosopher, but any mind to which the fountains of knowledge have been opened, and which has been taught, in any tolerable degree, to exercise its faculties — finds sources of inexhaustible interest in all that surrounds it; in the objects of nature, the achievements of art, the imaginations of poetry, the incidents of history, the ways of mankind past and present, and their prospects in the future. It is possible to become indifferent to all this, and that too without having exhausted a thousandth part of it; but only when one has had from the beginning no moral or human interest in these things, and has sought in them only the gratification of curiosity.

Now there is absolutely no reason in the nature of things why an amount of mental culture sufficient to give an intelligent interest in these objects of contemplation should not be the inheritance of every one born in a civilized country. As little is there an inherent necessity that any human being should be a selfish egotist, devoid of every feeling or care but those which centre in his own miserable individuality. Something far superior to this is sufficiently common, even now, to give ample earnest of what the human species may be made. Genuine private affections and a sincere interest in the public good are possible, though in unequal degrees, to every rightly brought up human being. In a world in which there is so much to interest, so much to enjoy, and so much also to correct and improve, every one who has this moderate amount of moral and intellectual requisites is capable of an existence which may be called enviable; and unless such a person, through bad laws, or subjection to the will of others, is denied the liberty to use the sources of happiness within his reach, he will not fail to find this enviable existence, if he escape the positive evils of life, the great sources of physical and mental suffering — such as indigence, disease, and the unkindness, worthlessness, or premature loss of objects of affection. The

main stress of the problem lies, therefore, in the contest with these calamities, from which it is a rare good fortune entirely to escape; which, as things now are, cannot be obviated, and often cannot be in any material degree mitigated. Yet no one whose opinion deserves a moment's consideration can doubt that most of the great positive evils of the world are in themselves removable, and will, if human affairs continue to improve, be in the end reduced within narrow limits. Poverty, in any sense implying suffering, may be completely extinguished by the wisdom of society, combined with the good sense and providence of individuals. Even that most intractable of enemies, disease, may be indefinitely reduced in dimensions by good physical and moral education, and proper control of noxious influences; while the progress of science holds out a promise for the future of still more direct conquests over this detestable foe. And every advance in that direction relieves us from some, not only of the chances which cut short our own lives, but, what concerns us still more, which deprive us of those in whom our happiness is wrapped up. As for vicissitudes of fortune, and other disappointments connected with worldly circumstances, these are principally the effect either of gross imprudence, of ill-regulated desires, or of bad or imperfect social institutions. All the grand sources, in short, of human suffering are in a great degree, many of them almost entirely, conquerable by human care and effort; and though their removal is grievously slow, — though a long succession of generations will perish in the breach before the conquest is completed, and this world becomes all that, if will and knowledge were not wanting, it might easily be made, — yet every mind sufficiently intelligent and generous to bear a part, however small and unconspicuous, in the endeavour, will draw a noble enjoyment from the contest itself, which he would not for any bribe in the form of selfish indulgence consent to be without.

And this leads to the true estimation of what is said by the objectors concerning the possibility, and the obligation, of learning to do without happiness. Unquestionably it is possible to do without happiness; it is done involuntarily by nineteen twentieths of mankind, even in those parts of our present world which

are at least deep in barbarism; and it often has to be done voluntarily by the hero or the martyr, for the sake of something which he prizes more than his individual happiness. But this something, what is it, unless the happiness of others, or some of the requisites of happiness? It is noble to be capable of resigning entirely one's own portion to happiness, or chances of it: but, after all, this self-sacrifice must be for some end; it is not its own end; and if we are told that its end is not happiness, but virtue, which is better than happiness, I ask, would the sacrifice be made if the hero or martyr did not believe that it would earn for others immunity from similar sacrifices? Would it be made, if he thought that his renunciation of happiness for himself would produce no fruit for any of his fellow-creatures, but to make their lot like his, and place them also in the condition of persons who have renounced happiness? All honour to those who can abnegate for themselves the personal enjoyment of life, when by such renunciation they contribute worthily to increase the amount of happiness in the world; but he who does it, or professes to do it, for any other purpose, is no more deserving of admiration than the ascetic mounted on his pillar. He may be an inspiriting proof of what men *can* do, but assuredly not an example of what they *should*.

Though it is only in a very imperfect state of the world's arrangements that any one can best serve the happiness of others by the absolute sacrifice of his own, yet so long as the world is in that imperfect state, I fully acknowledge that the readiness to make such a sacrifice is the highest virtue which can be found in man. I will add, that in this condition of the world, paradoxical as the assertion may be, the conscious ability to do without happiness gives the best prospect of realizing such happiness as is attainable. For nothing except that consciousness can raise a person above the chances of life, by making him feel that, let fate and fortune do their worst, they have not power to subdue him: which, once felt, frees him from excess of anxiety concerning the evils of life, and enables him, like many a Stoic in the worst times of the Roman Empire, to cultivate in tranquillity the sources of satisfaction accessible to him, without concerning himself about

the uncertainty of their duration, any more than about their inevitable end.

Meanwhile, let utilitarians never cease to claim the morality of self-devotion as a possession which belongs by as good a right to them as either to the Stoic or to the Transcendentalist. The utilitarian morality does recognize in human beings the power of sacrificing their own greatest good for the good of others. It only refuses to admit that the sacrifice is itself a good. A sacrifice which does not increase, or tend to increase, the sum total of happiness, it considers as wasted. The only self-renunciation which it applauds, is devotion to the happiness, or to some of the means of happiness, of others; either of mankind collectively, or of individuals within the limits imposed by the collective interests of mankind.

I must again repeat, what the assailants of utilitarianism seldom have the justice to acknowledge, that the happiness which forms the utilitarian standard of what is right in conduct, is not the agent's own happiness, but that of all concerned. As between his own happiness and that of others, utilitarianism requires him to be as strictly impartial as a disinterested and benevolent spectator. In the golden rule of Jesus of Nazareth, we read the complete spirit of the ethics of utility. To do as one would be done by, and to love one's neighbour as one's self, constitute the ideal perfection of utilitarian morality. As the means of making the nearest approach to this ideal, utility would enjoin, first, that laws and social arrangements should place the happiness, or (as speaking practically it may be called) the interest, of every individual as nearly as possible in harmony with the interest of the whole; and secondly, that education and opinion, which have so vast a power over human character, should so use that power as to establish in the mind of every individual an indissoluble association between his own happiness and the good of the whole, especially between his own happiness and the practice of such modes of conduct, negative and positive, as regard for the universal happiness prescribes; so that not only he may be unable to conceive the possibility of happiness to himself, consistently with conduct opposed to the general good, but also that a direct

impulse to promote the general good may be in every individual one of the habitual motives of action, and the sentiments connected therewith may fill a large and prominent place in every human being's sentient existence. If the impugners of the utilitarian morality represented it to their own minds in this its true character, I know not what recommendation possessed by any other morality they could possibly affirm to be wanting to it, what more beautiful or more exalted developments of human nature any other ethical system can be supposed to foster, or what springs of action, not accessible to the utilitarian, such systems rely on for giving effect to their mandates.

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CHAPTER III. OF THE ULTIMATE SANCTION OF THE PRINCIPLE OF UTILITY

The question is often asked, and properly so, in regard to any supposed moral standard — What is its sanction? what are the motives to obey it? or more specifically, what is the source of its obligation? whence does it derive its binding force? It is a necessary part of moral philosophy to provide the answer to this question; which, though frequently assuming the shape of an objection to the utilitarian morality, as if it had some special applicability to that above others, really arises in regard to all standards. It arises, in fact, whenever a person is called on to *adopt* a standard or refer morality to any basis on which he has not been accustomed to rest it. For the customary morality, that which education and opinion have consecrated, is the only one which presents itself to the mind with the feeling of being *in itself* obligatory; and when a person is asked to believe that this morality *derives* its obligation from some general principle round which custom has not thrown the same halo, the assertion is to him a paradox; the supposed corollaries seem to have a more binding force than the original theorem; the superstructure seems to stand better without, than with, what is represented as its foundation. He says to himself, I feel that I am bound not to

rob or murder, betray or deceive; but why am I bound to promote the general happiness? If my own happiness lies in something else, why may I not give that the preference?

If the view adopted by the utilitarian philosophy of the nature of the moral sense be correct, this difficulty will always present itself, until the influences which form moral character have taken the same hold of the principle which they have taken of some of the consequences — until, by the improvement of education, the feeling of unity with our fellow-creatures shall be (what it cannot be doubted that Christ intended it to be) as deeply rooted in our character, and to our own consciousness as completely a part of our nature, as the horror of crime is in an ordinarily well-brought-up young person. In the mean time, however, the difficulty has no peculiar application to the doctrine of utility, but is inherent in every attempt to analyze morality and reduce it to principles; which, unless the principle is already in men's minds invested with as much sacredness as any of its applications, always seems to divest them of a part of their sanctity.

The principle of utility either has, or there is no reason why it might not have, all the sanctions which belong to any other system of morals. Those sanctions are either external or internal. Of the external sanctions it is not necessary to speak at any length. They are, the hope of favour and the fear of displeasure from our fellow-creatures or from the Ruler of the Universe, along with whatever we may have of sympathy or affection for them or of love and awe of Him, inclining us to do His will independently of selfish consequences. There is evidently no reason why all these motives for observance should not attach themselves to the utilitarian morality, as completely and as powerfully as to any other. Indeed, those of them which refer to our fellow-creatures are sure to do so, in proportion to the amount of general intelligence; for whether or not there be any other ground of moral obligation than the general happiness, men do desire happiness; and however imperfect may be their own practice, they desire and commend all conduct in others towards themselves, by which they think their happiness is promoted. With regard to the religious motive, if men believe, as most profess to do, in the good-

ness of God, those who think that conduciveness to the general happiness is the essence, or even only the criterion, of good, must necessarily believe that it is also that which God approves. The whole force therefore of external reward and punishment, whether physical or moral, and whether proceeding from God or from our fellow-men, together with all that the capacities of human nature admit, of disinterested devotion to either, become available to enforce the utilitarian morality, in proportion as that morality is recognized; and the more powerfully, the more the appliances of education and general cultivation are bent to the purpose.

So far as to external sanctions. The internal sanction of duty, whatever our standard of duty may be, is one and the same — a feeling in our own mind; a pain, more or less intense, attendant on violation of duty, which in properly cultivated moral natures rises, in the more serious cases, into shrinking from it as an impossibility. This feeling, when disinterested, and connecting itself with the pure idea of duty, and not with some particular form of it, or with any of the merely accessory circumstances, is the essence of Conscience; though in that complex phenomenon as it actually exists, the simple fact is in general all encrusted over with collateral associations, derived from sympathy, from love, and still more from fear; from all the forms of religious feeling; from the recollections of childhood and of all our past life; from self-esteem, desire of the esteem of others, and occasionally even self-abasement. This extreme complication is, I apprehend, the origin of the sort of mystical character which, by a tendency of the human mind, of which there are many other examples, is apt to be attributed to the idea of moral obligation, and which leads people to believe that the idea cannot possibly attach itself to any other objects than those which, by a supposed mysterious law, are found in our present experience to excite it. Its binding force, however, consists in the existence of a mass of feeling which must be broken through in order to do what violates our standard of right, and which, if we do nevertheless violate that standard, will probably have to be encountered afterwards in the form of remorse. Whatever theory we have of

the nature or origin of conscience, this is what essentially constitutes it.

The ultimate sanction, therefore, of all morality (external motives apart) being a subjective feeling in our own minds, I see nothing embarrassing to those whose standard is utility, in the question, what is the sanction of that particular standard? We may answer, the same as of all other moral standards, — the conscientious feelings of mankind. Undoubtedly this sanction has no binding efficacy on those who do not possess the feelings it appeals to; but neither will these persons be more obedient to any other moral principle than to the utilitarian one. On them morality of any kind has no hold but through the external sanctions. Meanwhile the feelings exist, a fact in human nature, the reality of which, and the great power with which they are capable of acting on those in whom they have been duly cultivated, are proved by experience. No reason has ever been shown why they may not be cultivated to as great intensity in connection with the utilitarian as with any other rule of morals.

There is, I am aware, a disposition to believe that a person who sees in moral obligation a transcendental fact, an objective reality belonging to the province of "Things in themselves," is likely to be more obedient to it than one who believes it to be entirely subjective, having its seat in human consciousness only. But whatever a person's opinion may be on this point of Ontology, the force he is really urged by is his own subjective feeling, and is exactly measured by its strength. No one's belief that Duty is an objective reality is stronger than the belief that God is so; yet the belief in God, apart from the expectation of actual reward and punishment, only operates on conduct through and in proportion to the subjective religious feeling. The sanction, so far as it is disinterested, is always in the mind itself; and the notion, therefore, of the transcendental moralist must be that this sanction will not exist *in* the mind unless it is believed to have its root out of the mind; and that if a person is able to say to himself, That which is restraining me, and which is called my conscience, is only a feeling in my own mind, he may possibly draw the con-

clusion that when the feeling ceases the obligation ceases, and that if he find the feeling inconvenient, he may disregard it and endeavour to get rid of it. But is this danger confined to the utilitarian morality? Does the belief that moral obligation has its seat outside the mind make the feeling of it too strong to be got rid of? The fact is so far otherwise that all moralists admit and lament the ease with which, in the generality of minds, conscience can be silenced or stifled. The question, Need I obey my conscience? is quite as often put to themselves by persons who never heard of the principle of utility, as by its adherents. Those whose conscientious feelings are so weak as to allow of their asking this question, if they answer it affirmatively, will not do so because they believe in the transcendental theory, but because of the external sanctions.

It is not necessary for the present purpose to decide whether the feeling of duty is innate or implanted. Assuming it to be innate, it is an open question to what objects it naturally attaches itself; for the philosophic supporters of that theory are now agreed that the intuitive perception is of principles of morality, and not of the details. If there be anything innate in the matter, I see no reason why the feeling which is innate should not be that of regard to the pleasures and pains of others. If there is any principle of morals which is intuitively obligatory, I should say it must be that. If so, the intuitive ethics would coincide with the utilitarian, and there would be no further quarrel between them. Even as it is, the intuitive moralists, though they believe that there are other intuitive moral obligations, do already believe this to be one; for they unanimously hold that a large *portion* of morality turns upon the consideration due to the interests of our fellow-creatures. Therefore, if the belief in the transcendental origin or moral obligation gives an additional efficacy to the internal sanction, it appears to me that the utilitarian principle has already the benefit of it.

On the other hand, if, as is my own belief, the moral feelings are not innate, but acquired, they are not for that reason the less natural. It is natural to man to speak, to reason, to build cities, to cultivate the ground, though these are acquired faculties. The

moral feelings are not indeed a part of our nature, in the sense of being in any perceptible degree present in all of us; but this, unhappily, is a fact admitted by those who believe the most strenuously in their transcendental origin. Like the other acquired capacities above referred to, the moral faculty, if not a part of our nature, is a natural outgrowth from it; capable, like them, in a certain small degree, of springing up spontaneously; and susceptible of being brought by cultivation to a high degree of development. Unhappily it is also susceptible, by a sufficient use of the external sanctions and of the force of early impressions, of being cultivated in almost any direction; so that there is hardly anything so absurd or so mischievous that it may not, by means of these influences, be made to act on the human mind with all the authority of conscience. To doubt that the same potency might be given by the same means to the principle of utility, even if it had no foundation in human nature, would be flying in the face of all experience.

But moral associations which are wholly of artificial creation, when intellectual culture goes on, yield by degrees to the dissolving force of analysis; and if the feeling of duty, when associated with utility, would appear equally arbitrary; if there were no leading department of our nature, no powerful class of sentiments, with which that association would harmonize, which would make us feel it congenial, and incline us not only to foster it in others (for which we have abundant interested motives), but also to cherish it in ourselves; if there were not, in short, a natural basis of sentiment for utilitarian morality, it might well happen that this association also, even after it had been implanted by education, might be analyzed away.

But there *is* this basis of powerful natural sentiment; and this it is which, when once the general happiness is recognized as the ethical standard, will constitute the strength of the utilitarian morality. This firm foundation is that of the social feelings of mankind; the desire to be in unity with our fellow-creatures, which is already a powerful principle in human nature, and happily one of those which tend to become stronger, even without express inculcation, from the influences of advancing civiliza-

tion. The social state is at once so natural, so necessary, and so habitual to man, that, except in some unusual circumstances or by an effort of voluntary abstraction, he never conceives himself otherwise than as a member of a body; and this association is rivetted more and more, as mankind is further removed from the state of savage independence. Any condition, therefore, which is essential to a state of society, becomes more and more an inseparable part of every person's conception of the state of things which he is born into, and which is the destiny of a human being.

Now, society between human beings, except in the relation of master and slave, is manifestly impossible on any other footing than that the interests of all are to be consulted. Society between equals can only exist on the understanding that the interests of all are to be regarded equally. And since in all states of civilization, every person, except an absolute monarch, has equals, every one is obliged to live on these terms with somebody; and in every age some advance is made towards a state in which it will be impossible to live permanently on other terms with anybody. In this way people grow up unable to conceive as possible to them a state of total disregard of other people's interests. They are under a necessity of conceiving themselves as at least abstaining from all the grosser injuries, and (if only for their own protection) living in a state of constant protest against them. They are also familiar with the fact of co-operating with others, and proposing to themselves a collective, not an individual interest, as the aim (at least for the time being) of their actions. So long as they are co-operating, their ends are identified with those of others; there is at least a temporary feeling that the interests of others are their own interests. Not only does all strengthening of social ties, and all healthy growth of society, give to each individual a stronger personal interest in practically consulting the welfare of others; it also leads him to identify his *feelings* more and more with their good, or at least with an ever-greater degree of practical consideration for it. He comes, as though instinctively, to be conscious of himself as a being who *of course* pays regard to others. The good of others becomes to him a thing naturally

and necessarily to be attended to, like any of the physical conditions of our existence. Now, whatever amount of this feeling a person has, he is urged by the strongest motives both of interest and of sympathy to demonstrate it, and to the utmost of his power encourage it in others; and even if he has none of it himself, he is as greatly interested as any one else that others should have it. Consequently, the smallest germs of the feeling are laid hold of and nourished by the contagion of sympathy and the influences of education; and a complete web of corroborative association is woven round it, by the powerful agency of the external sanctions. This mode of conceiving ourselves and human life, as civilization goes on, is felt to be more and more natural. Every step in political improvement renders it more so, by removing the sources of opposition of interest, and levelling those inequalities of legal privilege between individuals or classes, owing to which there are large portions of mankind whose happiness it is still practicable to disregard. In an improving state of the human mind, the influences are constantly on the increase, which tend to generate in each individual a feeling of unity with all the rest; which feeling, if perfect, would make him never think of, or desire, any beneficial condition for himself, in the benefits of which they are not included. If we now suppose this feeling of unity to be taught as a religion, and the whole force of education, of institutions, and of opinion, directed, as it once was in the case of religion, to make every person grow up from infancy surrounded on all sides both by the profession and by the practice of it, I think that no one, who can realize this conception, will feel any misgiving about the sufficiency of the ultimate sanction for the Happiness morality. To any ethical student who finds the realization difficult I recommend, as a means of facilitating it, the second of M. Comte's two principal works, the "Système de Politique Positive." I entertain the strongest objections to the system of politics and morals set forth in that treatise; but I think it has superabundantly shown the possibility of giving to the service of humanity, even without the aid of belief in a Providence, both the physical power and the social efficacy of a religion; making it take hold of human

life, and colour all thought, feeling, and action, in a manner of which the greatest ascendency ever exercised by any religion may be but a type and foretaste; and of which the danger is, not that it should be insufficient, but that it should be so excessive as to interfere unduly with human freedom and individuality.

Neither is it necessary to the feeling which constitutes the binding force of the utilitarian morality on those who recognize it, to wait for those social influences which would make its obligation felt by mankind at large. In the comparatively early state of human advancement in which we now live, a person cannot indeed feel that entireness of sympathy with all others, which would make any real discordance in the general direction of their conduct in life impossible; but already a person in whom the social feeling is at all developed, cannot bring himself to think of the rest of his fellow-creatures as struggling rivals with him for the means of happiness, whom he must desire to see defeated in their object in order that he may succeed in his. The deeply rooted conception which every individual even now has of himself as a social being, tends to make him feel it one of his natural wants that there should be harmony between his feelings and aims and those of his fellow-creatures. If differences of opinion and of mental culture make it impossible for him to share many of their actual feelings, — perhaps make him denounce and defy those feelings, — he still needs to be conscious that his real aim and theirs do not conflict; that he is not opposing himself to what they really wish for, namely, their own good, but is, on the contrary, promoting it. This feeling in most individuals is much inferior in strength to their selfish feelings, and is often wanting altogether. But to those who have it, it possesses all the characters of a natural feeling. It does not present itself to their minds as a superstition of education, or a law despotically imposed by the power of society, but as an attribute which it would not be well for them to be without. This conviction is the ultimate sanction of the greatest Happiness morality. This it is which makes any mind, of well-developed feelings, work with, and not against, the outward motives to care for others, afforded by what I have called the external sanctions; and when those sanctions are wanting,

or act in an opposite direction, constitutes in itself a powerful internal binding force, in proportion to the sensitiveness and thoughtfulness of the character; since few but those whose mind is a moral blank, could bear to lay out their course of life on the plan of paying no regard to others except so far as their own private interest compels.

CHAPTER IV. OF WHAT SORT OF PROOF THE PRINCIPLE OF UTILITY IS SUSCEPTIBLE

It has already been remarked, that questions of ultimate ends do not admit of proof, in the ordinary acceptation of the term. To be incapable of proof by reasoning is common to all first principles; to the first premises of our knowledge, as well as to those of our conduct. But the former, being matters of fact, may be the subject of a direct appeal to the faculties which judge of fact, namely, our senses, and our internal consciousness. Can an appeal be made to the same faculties on questions of practical ends? Or by what other faculty is cognizance taken of them?

Questions about ends are, in other words, questions what things are desirable. The utilitarian doctrine is, that happiness is desirable, and the only thing desirable, as an end; all other things being only desirable as means to that end.

What ought to be required of this doctrine — what conditions is it requisite that the doctrine should fulfil — to make good its claim to be believed?

The only proof capable of being given that an object is visible, is that people actually see it. The only proof that a sound is audible, is that people hear it; and so of the other sources of our experience. In like manner, I apprehend, the sole evidence it is possible to produce that anything is desirable, is that people do actually desire it. If the end which the utilitarian doctrine proposes to itself were not, in theory and in practice, acknowledged to be an end, nothing could ever convince any person that it was so. No reason can be given why the general happiness is desir-

able except that each person, so far as he believes it to be attainable, desires his own happiness. This, however, being a fact, we have not only all the proof which the case admits of, but all which it is possible to require, that happiness is a good; that each person's happiness is a good to that person, and the general happiness, therefore, a good to the aggregate of all persons. Happiness has made out its title as *one* of the ends of conduct, and consequently one of the criteria of morality.

But it has not, by this alone, proved itself to be the sole criterion. To do that, it would seem, by the same rule, necessary to show, not only that people desire happiness, but that they never desire anything else. Now it is palpable that they do desire things which, in common language, are decidedly distinguished from happiness. They desire, for example, virtue, and the absence of vice, no less really than pleasure, and the absence of pain. The desire of virtue is not as universal, but it is as authentic a fact, as the desire of happiness. Hence the opponents of the utilitarian standard deem that they have a right to infer that there are other ends of human action besides happiness, and that happiness is not the standard of approbation and disapprobation.

But does the utilitarian doctrine deny that people desire virtue, or maintain that virtue is not a thing to be desired? The very reverse. It maintains not only that virtue is to be desired, but that it is to be desired disinterestedly, for itself. Whatever may be the opinion of utilitarian moralists as to the original conditions by which virtue is made virtue; however they may believe (as they do) that actions and dispositions are only virtuous because they promote another end than virtue; yet this being granted, and it having been decided, from considerations of this description, which *is* virtuous, they not only place virtue at the very head of the things which are good as means to the ultimate end, but they also recognize as a psychological fact the possibility of its being, to the individual, a good in itself, without looking to any end beyond it; and hold, that the mind is not in a right state, not in a state conformable to Utility, not in the state most conducive to the general happiness, unless it does love vir-

tue in this manner — as a thing desirable in itself, even although, in the individual instance, it should not produce those other desirable consequences which it tends to produce, and on account of which it is held to be virtue. This opinion is not, in the smallest degree, a departure from the Happiness principle. The ingredients of happiness are very various, and each of them is desirable in itself, and not merely when considered as swelling an aggregate. The principle of utility does not mean that any given pleasure, as music, for instance, or any given exemption from pain, as, for example, health, are to be looked upon as means to a collective something termed happiness, and to be desired on that account. They are desired and desirable in and for themselves; besides being means, they are a part of the end. Virtue, according to the utilitarian doctrine, is not naturally and originally part of the end, but it is capable of becoming so; and in those who love it disinterestedly it has become so, and is desired and cherished, not as a means to happiness, but as a part of their happiness.

To illustrate this further, we may remember that virtue is not the only thing, originally a means, and which if it were not a means to anything else, would be and remain indifferent, but which by association with what it is a means to, comes to be desired for itself, and that too with the utmost intensity. What, for example, shall we say of the love of money? There is nothing originally more desirable about money than about any heap of glittering pebbles. Its worth is solely that of the things which it will buy; the desires for other things than itself, which it is a means of gratifying. Yet the love of money is not only one of the strongest moving forces of human life, but money is, in many cases, desired in and for itself; the desire to possess it is often stronger than the desire to use it, and goes on increasing when all the desires which point to ends beyond it, to be compassed by it, are falling off. It may then be said truly, that money is desired not for the sake of an end, but as part of the end. From being a means to happiness, it has come to be itself a principal ingredient of the individual's conception of happiness. The same may be said of the majority of the great objects of human life — power, for example, or fame; except that to each of these there

is a certain amount of immediate pleasure annexed, which has at least the semblance of being naturally inherent in them; a thing which cannot be said of money. Still, however, the strongest natural attraction, both of power and of fame, is the immense aid they give to the attainment of our other wishes; and it is the strong association thus generated between them and all our objects of desire, which gives to the direct desire of them the intensity it often assumes, so as in some characters to surpass in strength all other desires. In these cases the means have become a part of the end, and a more important part of it than any of the things which they are means to. What was once desired as an instrument for the attainment of happiness, has come to be desired for its own sake. In being desired for its own sake it is, however, desired as *part* of happiness. The person is made, or thinks he would be made, happy by its mere possession; and is made unhappy by failure to obtain it. The desire of it is not a different thing from the desire of happiness, any more than the love of music, or the desire of health. They are included in happiness. They are some of the elements of which the desire of happiness is made up. Happiness is not an abstract idea, but a concrete whole; and these are some of its parts. And the utilitarian standard sanctions and approves their being so. Life would be a poor thing, very ill provided with sources of happiness, if there were not this provision of nature, by which things originally indifferent, but conducive to, or otherwise associated with, the satisfaction of our primitive desires, become in themselves sources of pleasure more valuable than the primitive pleasures, both in permanency, in the space of human existence that they are capable of covering, and even in intensity.

Virtue, according to the utilitarian conception, is a good of this description. There was no original desire of it, or motive to it, save its conduciveness to pleasure, and especially to protection from pain. But through the association thus formed, it may be felt a good in itself, and desired as such with as great intensity as any other good; and with this difference between it and the love of money, of power, or of fame, that all of these may, and often do, render the individual noxious to the other members of

the society to which he belongs, whereas there is nothing which makes him so much a blessing to them as the cultivation of the disinterested love of virtue. And consequently, the utilitarian standard, while it tolerates and approves those other acquired desires, up to the point beyond which they would be more injurious to the general happiness than promotive of it, enjoins the cultivation of the love of virtue up to the greatest strength possible, as being above all things important to the general happiness.

It results from the preceding considerations, that there is in reality nothing desired except happiness. Whatever is desired otherwise than as a means to some end beyond itself, and ultimately to happiness, is desired as itself a part of happiness, and is not desired for itself until it has become so. Those who desire virtue for its own sake, desire it either because the consciousness of it is a pleasure, or because the consciousness of being without it is a pain, or for both reasons united; as in truth the pleasure and pain seldom exist separately, but almost always together, the same person feeling pleasure in the degree of virtue attained, and pain in not having attained more. If one of these gave him no pleasure, and the other no pain, he would not love or desire virtue, or would desire it only for the other benefits which it might produce to himself or to persons whom he cared for.

We have now, then, an answer to the question, of what sort of proof the principle of utility is susceptible. If the opinion which I have now stated is psychologically true, if human nature is so constituted as to desire nothing which is not either a part of happiness or a means of happiness, we can have no other proof, and we require no other, that these are the only things desirable. If so, happiness is the sole end of human action, and the promotion of it the test by which to judge of all human conduct; from whence it necessarily follows that it must be the criterion of morality, since a part is included in the whole.

And now to decide whether this is really so; whether mankind does desire nothing for itself but that which is pleasure to it, or of which the absence is a pain; we have evidently arrived at a question of fact and experience, dependent, like all similar ques-

tions, upon evidence. It can only be determined by practised self-consciousness and self-observation, assisted by observation of others. I believe that these sources of evidence, impartially consulted, will declare that desiring a thing and finding it pleasant, aversion to it and thinking of it as painful, are phenomena entirely inseparable, or rather two parts of the same phenomenon; in strictness of language, two different modes of naming the same psychological fact; that to think of an object as desirable (unless for the sake of its consequences), and to think of it as pleasant, are one and the same thing; and that to desire anything, except in proportion as the idea of it is pleasant, is a physical and metaphysical impossibility.

So obvious does this appear to me, that I expect it will hardly be disputed; and the objection made will be, not that desire can possibly be directed to anything ultimately except pleasure and exemption from pain, but that the will is a different thing from desire; that a person of confirmed virtue, or any other person whose purposes are fixed, carries out his purposes without any thought of the pleasure he has in contemplating them, or expects to derive from their fulfilment; and persists in acting on them, even though these pleasures are much diminished by changes in his character or decay of his passive sensibilities, or are outweighed by the pains which the pursuit of the purposes may bring upon him. All this I fully admit, and have stated it elsewhere, as positively and emphatically as any one. Will, the active phenomenon, is a different thing from desire, the state of passive sensibility, and though originally an offshoot from it, may in time take root and detach itself from the parent stock; so much so, that in case of an habitual purpose, instead of willing the thing because we desire it, we often desire it only because we will it. This, however, is but an instance of that familiar fact, the power of habit, and is nowise confined to the case of virtuous actions. Many indifferent things, which men originally did from a motive of some sort, they continue to do from habit. Sometimes this is done unconsciously, the consciousness coming only after the action; at other times with conscious volition; but volition which has become habitual, and is put into operation by the force of

habit, in opposition perhaps to the deliberate preference, as often happens with those who have contracted habits of vicious or hurtful indulgence. Third and last comes the case in which the habitual act of will in the individual instance is not in contradiction to the general intention prevailing at other times, but in fulfilment of it; as in the case of the person of confirmed virtue, and of all who pursue deliberately and consistently any determinate end. The distinction between will and desire thus understood, is an authentic and highly important psychological fact; but the fact consists solely in this, that will, like all other parts of our constitution, is amenable to habit, and that we may will from habit what we no longer desire for itself, or desire only because we will it. It is not the less true that will, in the beginning, is entirely produced by desire; including in that term the repelling influence of pain as well as the attractive one of pleasure. Let us take into consideration, no longer the person who has a confirmed will to do right, but him in whom that virtuous will is still feeble, conquerable by temptation, and not to be fully relied on; by what means can it be strengthened? How can the will to be virtuous, where it does not exist in sufficient force, be implanted or awakened? Only by making the person *desire* virtue; by making him think of it in a pleasurable light, or of its absence in a painful one. It is by associating the doing right with pleasure, or the doing wrong with pain, or by eliciting and impressing and bringing home to the person's experience the pleasure naturally involved in the one or the pain in the other, that it is possible to call forth that will to be virtuous, which, when confirmed, acts without any thought of either pleasure or pain. Will is the child of desire, and passes out of the dominion of its parent only to come under that of habit. That which is the result of habit affords no presumption of being intrinsically good; and there would be no reason for wishing that the purpose of virtue should become independent of pleasure and pain, were it not that the influence of the pleasurable and painful associations which prompt to virtue is not sufficiently to be depended on for unerring constancy of action until it has acquired the support of habit. Both in feeling and in conduct, habit is the only thing which imparts cer-

tainty; and it is because of the importance to others of being able to rely absolutely on one's feelings and conduct, and to one's self of being able to rely on one's own, that the will to do right ought to be cultivated into this habitual independence. In other words, this state of the will is a means to good, not intrinsically a good; and does not contradict the doctrine that nothing is a good to human beings but in so far as it is either itself pleasurable, or a means of attaining pleasure or averting pain.

But if this doctrine be true, the principle of utility is proved. Whether it is so or not, must now be left to the consideration of the thoughtful reader.

HERBERT SPENCER

(1820–1903)

THE PRINCIPLES OF ETHICS*

PART I. — THE DATA OF ETHICS

CHAPTER II. THE EVOLUTION OF CONDUCT

§ 3. WE have become quite familiar with the idea of an evolution of structures throughout the ascending types of animals. To a considerable degree we have become familiar with the thought that an evolution of functions has gone on *pari passu* with the evolution of structures. Now advancing a step, we have to frame a conception of the evolution of conduct, as correlated with this evolution of structures and functions.

These three subjects are to be definitely distinguished. Obviously the facts comparative morphology sets forth, form a whole which, though it cannot be treated in general or in detail without taking into account facts belonging to comparative physiology, is essentially independent. No less clear is it that we may devote our attention exclusively to that progressive differentiation of functions, and combination of functions, which accompanies the development of structures — may say no more about the characters and connexions of organs than is implied in describing their separate and joint actions. And the subject of conduct lies outside the subject of functions, if not as far as this lies outside the subject of structures, still, far enough to make it substantially separate. For those functions which are already variously compounded to achieve what we regard as single bodily acts, are endlessly re-compounded to achieve that co-ordination of bodily acts which is known as conduct.

We are concerned with functions in the true sense, while we think of them as processes carried on within the body; and, with-

* Part I., *The Data of Ethics*, London, Williams & Norgate, 1879. Reprinted here from the 6th American copyright edition, New York, D. Appleton & Co., 1903.

out exceeding the limits of physiology, we may treat of their adjusted combinations, so long as these are regarded as parts of the vital *consensus*. If we observe how the lungs aërate the blood which the heart sends to them; how heart and lungs together supply aërated blood to the stomach, and so enable it to do its work; how these co-operate with sundry secreting and excreting glands to further digestion and to remove waste matter; and how all of them join to keep the brain in a fit condition for carrying on those actions which indirectly conduce to maintenance of the life at large; we are dealing with functions. Even when considering how parts that act directly on the environment — legs, arms, wings — perform their duties, we are still concerned with functions in that aspect of them constituting physiology, so long as we restrict our attention to internal processes, and to internal combinations of them. But we enter on the subject of conduct when we begin to study such combinations among the actions of sensory and motor organs as are externally manifested. Suppose that instead of observing those contractions of muscles by which the optic axes are converged and the foci of the eyes adjusted (which is a portion of physiology), and that instead of observing the co-operation of other nerves, muscles, and bones, by which a hand is moved to a particular place and the fingers closed (which is also a portion of physiology), we observe a weapon being seized by a hand under guidance of the eyes. We now pass from the thought of combined internal functions to the thought of combined external motions. Doubtless if we could trace the cerebral processes which accompany these, we should find an inner physiological co-ordination corresponding with the outer co-ordination of actions. But this admission is consistent with the assertion, that when we ignore the internal combination and attend only to the external combination, we pass from a portion of physiology to a portion of conduct. For though it may be objected that the external combination instanced, is too simple to be rightly included under the name conduct, yet a moment's thought shows that it is joined with what we call conduct by insensible gradations. Suppose the weapon seized is used to ward off a blow. Suppose a counterblow is given. Suppose the aggressor runs and

is chased. Suppose there comes a struggle and a handing him over to the police. Suppose there follow the many and varied acts constituting a prosecution. Obviously the initial adjustment of an act to an end, inseparable from the rest, must be included with them under the same general head; and obviously from this initial simple adjustment, having intrinsically no moral character, we pass by degrees to the most complex adjustments and to those on which moral judgments are passed.

Hence, excluding all internal co-ordinations, our subject here is the aggregate of all external co-ordinations; and this aggregate includes not only the simplest as well as the most complex performed by human beings, but also those performed by all inferior beings considered as less or more evolved.

§ 4. Already the question — What constitutes advance in the evolution of conduct, as we trace it up from the lowest types of living creatures to the highest? has been answered by implication. A few examples will now bring the answer into conspicuous relief.

We saw that conduct is distinguished from the totality of actions by excluding purposeless actions; but during evolution this distinction arises by degrees. In the very lowest creatures most of the movements from moment to moment made, have not more recognizable aims than have the struggles of an epileptic. An infusorium swims randomly about, determined in its course not by a perceived object to be pursued or escaped, but, apparently, by varying stimuli in its medium; and its acts, unadjusted in any appreciable way to ends, lead it now into contact with some nutritive substance which it absorbs, and now into the neighbourhood of some creature by which it is swallowed and digested. Lacking those developed senses and motor powers which higher animals possess, ninety-nine in the hundred of these minute animals, severally living but for a few hours, disappear either by innutrition or by destruction. The conduct is constituted of actions so little adjusted to ends, that life continues only as long as the accidents of the environment are favourable. But when, among aquatic creatures, we observe one which, though still low

in type, is much higher than the infusorium — say a rotifer — we see how, along with larger size, more developed structures, and greater power of combining functions, there goes an advance in conduct. We see how by its whirling cilia it sucks in as food these small animals moving around; how by its prehensile tail it fixes itself to some object; how by withdrawing its outer organs and contracting its body, it preserves itself from this or that injury from time to time threatened; and how thus, by better adjusting its own actions, it becomes less dependent on the actions going on around, and so preserves itself for a longer period.

A superior sub-kingdom, as the Mollusca, still better exemplifies this contrast. When we compare a low mollusc, such as a floating ascidian, with a high mollusc, such as a cephalopod, we are again shown that greater organic evolution is accompanied by more evolved conduct. At the mercy of every marine creature large enough to swallow it, and drifted about by currents which may chance to keep it at sea or may chance to leave it fatally stranded, the ascidian displays but little adjustment of acts to ends in comparison with the cephalopod; which, now crawling over the beach, now exploring the rocky crevices, now swimming through the open water, now darting after a fish, now hiding itself from some larger animal in a cloud of ink, and using its suckered arms at one time for anchoring itself and at another for holding fast its prey; selects, and combines, and proportions its movements from minute to minute, so as to evade dangers which threaten, while utilizing chances of food which offer; so showing us varied activities which, in achieving special ends, achieve the general end of securing continuance of the activities.

Among vertebrate animals we similarly trace up, along with advance in structures and functions, this advance in conduct. A fish roaming about at hazard in search of something to eat, able to detect it by smell or sight only within short distances, and now and again rushing away in alarm on the approach of a bigger fish, makes adjustments of acts to ends that are relatively few and simple in their kinds; and shows us, as a consequence, how small is the average duration of life. So few survive to maturity that, to make up for destruction of unhatched young and small fry

and half-grown individuals, a million ova have to be spawned by a codfish that two may reach the spawning age. Conversely, by a highly-evolved mammal, such as an elephant, those general actions performed in common with the fish are far better adjusted to their ends. By sight as well, probably, as by odour, it detects food at relatively great distances; and when, at intervals, there arises a need for escape, relatively-great speed is attained. But the chief difference arises from the addition of new sets of adjustments. We have combined actions which facilitate nutrition — the breaking off of succulent and fruit-bearing branches, the selecting of edible growths throughout a comparatively wide reach; and, in case of danger, safety can be achieved not by flight only, but, if necessary, by defence or attack: bringing into combined use tusks, trunk, and ponderous feet. Further, we see various subsidiary acts adjusted to subsidiary ends — now the going into a river for coolness, and using the trunk as a means of projecting water over the body; now the employment of a bough for sweeping away flies from the back; now the making of signal sounds to alarm the herd, and adapting the actions to such sounds when made by others. Evidently, the effect of this more highly-evolved conduct is to secure the balance of the organic actions throughout far longer periods.

And now, on studying the doings of the highest of mammals, mankind, we not only find that the adjustments of acts to ends are both more numerous and better than among lower mammals; but we find the same thing on comparing the doings of higher races of men with those of lower races. If we take any one of the major ends achieved, we see greater completeness of achievement by civilized than by savage; and we also see an achievement of relatively numerous minor ends subserving major ends. Is it in nutrition? The food is obtained more regularly in response to appetite; it is far higher in quality; it is free from dirt; it is greater in variety; it is better prepared. Is it in warmth? The characters of the fabrics and forms of the articles used for clothing, and the adaptations of them to requirements from day to day and hour to hour, are much superior. Is it in dwellings? Between the shelter of boughs and grass which the lowest savage builds, and

the mansion of the civilized man, the constrast in aspect is not more extreme than is the contrast in number and efficiency of the adjustments of acts to ends betrayed in their respective constructions. And when with the ordinary activities of the savage we compare the ordinary civilized activities — as the business of the trader, which involves multiplied and complex transactions extending over long periods, or as professional avocations, prepared for by elaborate studies and daily carried on in endlessly-varied forms, or as political discussions and agitations, directed now to the carrying of this measure and now to the defeating of that, — we see sets of adjustments of acts to ends, not only immensely exceeding those seen among lower races of men in variety and intricacy, but sets to which lower races of men present nothing analogous. And along with this greater elaboration of life produced by the pursuit of more numerous ends, there goes that increased duration of life which constitutes the supreme end.

And here is suggested the need for supplementing this conception of evolving conduct. For besides being an improving adjustment of acts to ends, such as furthers prolongation of life, it is such as furthers increased amount of life. Reconsideration of the examples above given, will show that length of life is not by itself a measure of evolution of conduct; but that quantity of life must be taken into account. An oyster, adapted by its structure to the diffused food contained in the water it draws in, and shielded by its shell from nearly all dangers, may live longer than a cuttle-fish, which has such superior powers of dealing with numerous contingencies; but then, the sum of vital activities during any given interval is far less in the oyster than in the cuttle-fish. So a worm, ordinarily sheltered from most enemies by the earth it burrows through, which also supplies a sufficiency of its poor food, may have greater longevity than many of its annulose relatives, the insects; but one of these during its existence as larva and imago, may experience a greater quantity of the changes which constitute life. Nor is it otherwise when we compare the more evolved with the less evolved among mankind. The difference between the average lengths of the lives of savage and civilized, is no true measure of the difference between the totalities

of their two lives, considered as aggregates of thought, feeling, and action. Hence, estimating life by multiplying its length into its breadth, we must say that the augmentation of it which accompanies evolution of conduct, results from increase of both factors. The more multiplied and varied adjustments of acts to ends, by which the more developed creature from hour to hour fulfils more numerous requirements, severally add to the activities that are carried on abreast, and severally help to make greater the period through which such simultaneous activities endure. Each further evolution of conduct widens the aggregate of actions while conducing to elongation of it.

§ 5. Turn we now to a further aspect of the phenomena, separate from, but necessarily associated with, the last. Thus far we have considered only those adjustments of acts to ends which have for their final purpose complete individual life. Now we have to consider those adjustments which have for their final purpose the life of the species.

Self-preservation in each generation has all along depended on the preservation of offspring by preceding generations. And in proportion as evolution of the conduct subserving individual life is high, implying high organization, there must previously have been a highly-evolved conduct subserving nurture of the young. Throughout the ascending grades of the animal kingdom, this second kind of conduct presents stages of advance like those which we have observed in the first. Low down, where structures and functions are little developed, and the power of adjusting acts to ends but slight, there is no conduct, properly so named, furthering salvation of the species. Race-maintaining conduct, like self-maintaining conduct, arises gradually out of that which cannot be called conduct: adjusted actions are preceded by unadjusted ones. Protozoa spontaneously divide and sub-divide, in consequence of physical changes over which they have no control; or, at other times, after a period of quiescence, break up into minute portions which severally grow into new individuals. In neither case can conduct be alleged. Higher up, the process is that of ripening, at intervals, germ-cells and sperm-

cells, which, on occasion, are sent forth into the surrounding water and left to their fate: perhaps one in ten thousand surviving to maturity. Here, again, we see only development and dispersion going on apart from parental care. Types above these, as fish which choose fit places in which to deposit their ova, or as the higher crustaceans which carry masses of ova about until they are hatched, exhibit adjustments of acts to ends which we may properly call conduct; though it is of the simplest kind. Where, as among certain fish, the male keeps guard over the eggs, driving away intruders, there is an additional adjustment of acts to ends; and the applicability of the name conduct is more decided. Passing at once to creatures far superior, such as birds which, building nests and sitting on their eggs, feed their broods for considerable periods, and give them aid after they can fly; or such as mammals which, suckling their young for a time, continue afterwards to bring them food or protect them while they feed, until they reach ages at which they can provide for themselves; we are shown how this conduct which furthers race-maintenance evolves hand-in-hand with the conduct which furthers self-maintenance. That better organization which makes possible the last, makes possible the first also. Mankind exhibit a great progress of like nature. Compared with brutes, the savage, higher in his self-maintaining conduct, is higher too in his race-maintaining conduct. A larger number of the wants of offspring are provided for; and parental care, enduring longer, extends to the disciplining of offspring in arts and habits which fit them for their conditions of existence. Conduct of this order, equally with conduct of the first order, we see becoming evolved in a still greater degree as we ascend from savage to civilized. The adjustments of acts to ends in the rearing of children become far more elaborate, alike in number of ends met, variety of means used, and efficiency of their adaptations; and the aid and oversight are continued throughout a much greater part of early life.

In tracing up the evolution of conduct, so that we may frame a true conception of conduct in general, we have thus to recognize these two kinds as mutually dependent. Speaking generally, neither can evolve without evolution of the other; and the highest evolutions of the two must be reached simultaneously.

§ 6. To conclude, however, that on reaching a perfect adjustment of acts to ends subserving individual life and the rearing of offspring, the evolution of conduct becomes complete, is to conclude erroneously. Or rather, I should say, it is an error to suppose that either of these kinds of conduct can assume its highest form, without its highest form being assumed by a third kind of conduct yet to be named.

The multitudinous creatures of all kinds which fill the Earth, cannot live wholly apart from one another, but are more or less in presence of one another — are interfered with by one another. In large measure the adjustments of acts to ends which we have been considering, are components of that "struggle for existence" carried on both between members of the same species and between members of different species; and, very generally, a successful adjustment made by one creature involves an unsuccessful adjustment made by another creature, either of the same kind or of a different kind. That the carnivore may live, herbivores must die; and that its young may be reared, the young of weaker creatures must be orphaned. Maintenance of the hawk and its brood involves the deaths of many small birds; and that small birds may multiply, their progeny must be fed with innumerable sacrificed worms and larvæ. Competition among members of the same species has allied, though less conspicuous, results. The stronger often carries off by force the prey which the weaker has caught. Monopolizing certain hunting-grounds, the more ferocious drive others of their kind into less favourable places. With plant-eating animals, too, the like holds: the better food is secured by the more vigorous individuals, while the less vigorous and worse fed, succumb either directly from innutrition or indirectly from resulting inability to escape enemies. That is to say, among creatures whose lives are carried on antagonistically, each of the two kinds of conduct delineated above, must remain imperfectly evolved. Even in such few kinds of them as have little to fear from enemies or competitors, as lions or tigers, there is still inevitable failure in the adjustments of acts to ends towards the close of life. Death by starvation from inability to catch prey, shows a falling short of conduct from its ideal.

This imperfectly-evolved conduct introduces us by antithesis to conduct that is perfectly evolved. Contemplating these adjustments of acts to ends which miss completeness because they cannot be made by one creature without other creatures being prevented from making them, raises the thought of adjustments such that each creature may make them without preventing them from being made by other creatures. That the highest form of conduct must be so distinguished, is an inevitable implication; for while the form of conduct is such that adjustments of acts to ends by some necessitate non-adjustments by others, there remains room for modifications which bring conduct into a form avoiding this, and so making the totality of life greater.

From the abstract let us pass to the concrete. Recognizing men as the beings whose conduct is most evolved, let us ask under what conditions their conduct, in all three aspects of its evolution, reaches its limit. Clearly while the lives led are entirely predatory, as those of savages, the adjustments of acts to ends fall short of this highest form of conduct in every way. Individual life, ill carried on from hour to hour, is prematurely cut short; the fostering of offspring often fails, and is incomplete when it does not fail; and in so far as the ends of self-maintenance and race-maintenance are met, they are met by destruction of other beings, of different kind or of like kind. In social groups formed by compounding and re-compounding primitive hordes, conduct remains imperfectly evolved in proportion as there continue antagonisms between the groups and antagonisms between members of the same group — two traits necessarily associated; since the nature which prompts international aggression prompts aggression of individuals on one another. Hence the limit of evolution can be reached by conduct only in permanently peaceful societies. That perfect adjustment of acts to ends in maintaining individual life and rearing new individuals, which is effected by each without hindering others from effecting like perfect adjustments, is, in its very definition, shown to constitute a kind of conduct that can be approached only as war decreases and dies out.

A gap in this outline must now be filled up. There remains a further advance not yet even hinted. For beyond so behaving

that each achieves his ends without preventing others from achieving their ends, the members of a society may give mutual help in the achievement of ends. And if, either indirectly by industrial co-operation, or directly by volunteered aid, fellow-citizens can make easier for one another the adjustments of acts to ends, then their conduct assumes a still higher phase of evolution; since whatever facilitates the making of adjustments by each, increases the totality of the adjustments made, and serves to render the lives of all more complete.

§ 7. After this passing remark, I recur to the main proposition set forth in these two chapters, which has, I think, been fully justified. Guided by the truth that as the conduct with which Ethics deals is part of conduct at large, conduct at large must be generally understood before this part can be specially understood; and guided by the further truth that to understand conduct at large we must understand the evolution of conduct; we have been led to see that Ethics has for its subject-matter, that form which universal conduct assumes during the last stages of its evolution. We have also concluded that these last stages in the evolution of conduct are those displayed by the highest type of being, when he is forced, by increase of numbers, to live more and more in presence of his fellows. And there has followed the corollary that conduct gains ethical sanction in proportion as the activities, becoming less and less militant and more and more industrial, are such as do not necessitate mutual injury or hindrance, but consist with, and are furthered by, co-operation and mutual aid.

CHAPTER XV. ABSOLUTE AND RELATIVE ETHICS

§ 99. As applied to Ethics, the word "absolute" will by many be supposed to imply principles of right conduct that exist out of relation to life as conditioned on the Earth — out of relation to time and place, and independent of the Universe as now visible

to us — "eternal" principles, as they are called. Those, however, who recall the doctrine set forth in "First Principles," will hesitate to put this interpretation on the word. Right, as we can think it, necessitates the thought of not-right, or wrong, for its correlative; and hence, to ascribe rightness to the acts of the Power manifested through phenomena, is to assume the possibility that wrong acts may be committed by this Power. But how come there to exist, apart from this Power, conditions of such kind that subordination of its acts to them makes them right and insubordination wrong? How can Unconditioned Being be subject to conditions beyond itself?

If, for example, any one should assert that the Cause of Things, conceived in respect of fundamental moral attributes as like ourselves, did right in producing a Universe which, in the course of immeasurable time, has given origin to beings capable of pleasure, and would have done wrong in abstaining from the production of such a Universe; then, the comment to be made is that, imposing the moral ideas generated in his finite consciousness, upon the Infinite Existence which transcends consciousness, he goes behind that Infinite Existence and prescribes for it principles of action.

As implied in foregoing chapters, right and wrong as conceived by us can exist only in relation to the actions of creatures capable of pleasures and pains; seeing that analysis carries us back to pleasures and pains as the elements out of which the conceptions are framed.

But if the word "absolute," as used above, does not refer to the Unconditioned Being — if the principles of action distinguished as absolute and relative concern the conduct of conditioned beings; in what way are the words to be understood? An explanation of their meanings will be best conveyed by a criticism on the current conceptions of right and wrong.

§ 100. Conversations about the affairs of life habitually imply the belief that every deed named may be placed under the one head or the other. In discussing a political question, both sides take it for granted that some line of action may be chosen which

is right, while all other lines of action are wrong. So, too, is it with judgments on the doings of individuals: each of these is approved or disapproved on the assumption that it is definitely classable as good or bad. Even where qualifications are admitted, they are admitted with an implied idea that some such positive characterization is to be made.

Nor is it in popular thought and speech only that we see this. If not wholly and definitely, yet partially and by implication, the belief is expressed by moralists. In his "Methods of Ethics" 1st ed. p. 6) Mr. Sidgwick says: "That there is in any given circumstances some one thing which ought to be done and that this can be known, is a fundamental assumption, made not by philosophers only, but by all men who perform any processes of moral reasoning." [1] In this sentence there is specifically asserted only the last of the above propositions; namely, that, in every case, what "ought to be done" "can be known." But though that "which ought to be done" is not distinctly identified with "the right," it may be inferred, in the absence of any indication to the contrary, that Mr. Sidgwick regards the two as identical; and doubtless, in so conceiving the postulates of moral science, he is at one with most, if not all, who have made it a subject of study. At first sight, indeed, nothing seems more obvious than that if actions are to be judged at all, these postulates must be accepted. Nevertheless they may both be called in question, and I think it may be shown that neither of them is tenable. Instead of admitting that there is in every case a right and a wrong, it may be contended that in multitudinous cases no right, properly so-called, can be alleged, but only a least wrong; and further, it may be contended that in many of these cases where there can be alleged only a least wrong, it is not possible to ascertain with any precision which is the least wrong.

A great part of the perplexities in ethical speculation arise from neglect of this distinction between right and least wrong — between the absolutely right and the relatively right. And many

[1] I do not find this passage in the second edition; but the omission of it appears to have arisen not from any change of view, but because it did not naturally come into the re-cast form of the argument which the section contains.

further perplexities are due to the assumption that it can, in some way, be decided in every case which of two courses is morally obligatory.

§ 101. The law of absolute right can take no cognizance of pain, save the cognizance implied by negation. Pain is the correlative of some species of wrong — some kind of divergence from that course of action which perfectly fulfils all requirements. If, as was shown in an early chapter, the conception of good conduct always proves, when analyzed, to be the conception of a conduct which produces a surplus of pleasure somewhere; while, conversely, the conduct conceived as bad proves always to be that which inflicts somewhere a surplus of either positive or negative pain; then the absolutely good, the absolutely right, in conduct, can be that only which produces pure pleasure — pleasure unalloyed with pain anywhere. By implication, conduct which has any concomitant of pain, or any painful consequence, is partially wrong; and the highest claim to be made for such conduct is, that it is the least wrong which, under the conditions, is possible — the relatively right.

The contents of preceding chapters imply throughout that considered from the evolution point of view, the acts of men during the transition which has been, is still, and long will be, in progress, must, in most cases, be of the kind here classed as least wrong. In proportion to the incongruity between the natures men inherit from the pre-social state, and the requirements of social life, must be the amount of pain entailed by their actions, either on themselves or on others. In so far as pain is suffered, evil is inflicted; and conduct which inflicts any evil cannot be absolutely good.

To make clear the distinction here insisted upon between that perfect conduct which is the subject-matter of Absolute Ethics, and that imperfect conduct which is the subject-matter of Relative Ethics, some illustrations must be given.

§ 102. Among the best examples of absolutely right actions to be named, are those arising where the nature and the require-

ments have been moulded to one another before social evolution began. Two will here suffice.

Consider the relation of a healthy mother to a healthy infant. Between the two there exists a mutual dependence which is a source of pleasure to both. In yielding its natural food to the child, the mother receives gratification; and to the child there comes the satisfaction of appetite — a satisfaction which accompanies furtherance of life, growth, and increasing enjoyment. Let the relation be suspended, and on both sides there is suffering. The mother experiences both bodily pain and mental pain; and the painful sensation borne by the child, brings as its results physical mischief and some damage to the emotional nature. Thus the act is one that is to both exclusively pleasurable, while abstention entails pain on both; and it is consequently of the kind we here call absolutely right. In the parental relations of the father we are furnished with a kindred example. If he is well constituted in body and mind, his boy, eager for play, finds in him a sympathetic response; and their frolics, giving mutual pleasure, not only further the child's physical welfare, but strengthen that bond of good feeling between the two which makes subsequent guidance easier. And then if, repudiating the stupidities of early education as at present conceived and unhappily State-enacted, he has rational ideas of mental development, and sees that the second-hand knowledge gained through books should begin to supplement the first-hand knowledge gained by direct observation only when a good stock of this has been acquired, he will, with active sympathy, aid in that exploration of the surrounding world which his boy pursues with delight; giving and receiving gratification from moment to moment while furthering ultimate welfare. Here, again, are actions of a kind purely pleasurable alike in their immediate and remote effects — actions absolutely right.

The intercourse of adults yields, for the reason assigned, relatively few cases that fall completely within the same category. In their transactions from hour to hour, more or less of deduction from pure gratification is caused on one or other side by imperfect fitness to the requirements. The pleasures men gain by labouring

in their vocations and receiving in one form or other returns for their services, usually have the drawback that the labours are in a considerable degree displeasurable. Cases, however, do occur where the energies are so abundant that inaction is irksome; and where the daily work, not too great in duration, is of a kind appropriate to the nature; and where, as a consequence, pleasure rather than pain is a concomitant. When services yielded by such a one are paid for by another similarly adapted to his occupation, the entire transaction is of the kind we are here considering: exchange under agreement between two so constituted, becomes a means of pleasure to both, with no set-off of pain. Bearing in mind the form of nature which social discipline is producing, as shown in the contrast between savage and civilized, the implication is that ultimately men's activities at large will assume this character. Remembering that in the course of organic evolution, the means to enjoyment themselves eventually become sources of enjoyment; and that there is no form of action which may not through the development of appropriate structures become pleasurable; the inference must be that industrial activities carried on through voluntary co-operation, will in time acquire the character of absolute rightness as here conceived. Already, indeed, something like such a state has been reached among certain of those who minister to our æsthetic gratifications. The artist of genius — poet, painter, or musician — is one who obtains the means of living by acts that are directly pleasurable to him, while they yield, immediately or remotely, pleasures to others. Once more, among absolutely right acts may be named certain of those which we class as benevolent. I say certain of them, because such benevolent acts as entail submission to pain, positive or negative, that others may receive pleasure, are, by the definition, excluded. But there are benevolent acts of a kind yielding pleasure solely. Some one who has slipped is saved from falling by a by-stander; a hurt is prevented and satisfaction is felt by both. A pedestrian is choosing a dangerous route, or a fellow-passenger is about to alight at the wrong station, and, warned against doing so, is saved from evil: each being, as a consequence, gratified. There is a misunderstanding between friends, and one who sees how it has arisen, ex-

plains: the result being agreeable to all. Services to those around in the small affairs of life, may be, and often are, of a kind which there is equal pleasure in giving and receiving. Indeed, as was urged in the last chapter, the actions of developed altruism must habitually have this character. And so, in countless ways suggested by these few, men may add to one another's happiness without anywhere producing unhappiness — ways which are therefore absolutely right.

In contrast with these, consider the many actions which from hour to hour are gone through, now with an accompaniment of some pain to the actor and now bringing results that are partially painful to others, but which nevertheless are imperative. As implied by antithesis with cases above referred to, the wearisomeness of productive labour as ordinarily pursued, renders it in so far wrong; but then far greater suffering would result, both to the labourer and his family, and therefore far greater wrong would be done, were this wearisomeness not borne. Though the pains which the care of many children entail on a mother, form a considerable set-off from the pleasures secured by them to her children and herself; yet the miseries, immediate and remote, which neglect would entail so far exceed them, that submission to such pains up to the limit of physical ability to bear them, becomes morally imperative as being the least wrong. A servant who fails to fulfil an agreement in respect of work, or who is perpetually breaking crockery, or who pilfers, may have to suffer pain from being discharged; but since the evil to be borne by all concerned if incapacity or misconduct is tolerated, not in one case only but habitually, must be much greater, such infliction of pain is warranted as a means to preventing greater pain. Withdrawal of custom from a tradesman whose charges are too high, or whose commodities are inferior, or who gives short measure, or who is unpunctual, decreases his welfare, and perhaps injures his belongings; but as saving him from these evils would imply bearing the evils his conduct causes, and as such regard for his well-being would imply disregard of the well-being of some more worthy or more efficient tradesman to whom the custom would else go, and as, chiefly, general adoption of the implied course, having the

effect that the inferior would not suffer from their inferiority nor the superior gain by their superiority, would produce universal misery, withdrawal is justified — the act is relatively right.

§ 103. I pass now to the second of the two propositions above enunciated. After recognizing the truth that a large part of human conduct is not absolutely right, but only relatively right, we have to recognize the further truth that in many cases where there is no absolutely right course, but only courses that are more or less wrong, it is not possible to say which is the least wrong. Recurrence to the instances just given will show this.

There is a point up to which it is relatively right for a parent to carry self-sacrifice for the benefit of offspring; and there is a point beyond which self-sacrifice cannot be pushed without bringing, not only on himself or herself but also on the family, evils greater than those to be prevented by the self-sacrifice. Who shall say where this point is? Depending on the constitutions and needs of those concerned, it is in no two cases the same, and cannot be by any one more than guessed. The transgressions or shortcomings of a servant vary from the trivial to the grave, and the evils which discharge may bring range through countless degrees from slight to serious. The penalty may be inflicted for a very small offence, and then there is wrong done; or after numerous grave offences it may not be inflicted, and again there is wrong done. How shall be determined the degree of transgression beyond which to discharge is less wrong than not to discharge? In like manner with the shopkeeper's misdemeanours. No one can sum up either the amount of positive and negative pain which tolerating them involves, nor the amount of positive and negative pain involved by not tolerating them; and in medium cases no one can say where the one exceeds the other.

In men's wider relations frequently occur circumstances under which a decision one or other way is imperative, and yet under which not even the most sensitive conscience helped by the clearest judgment, can decide which of the alternatives is relatively right. Two examples will suffice. Here is a merchant who loses by the failure of a man indebted to him. Unless he gets help he

himself will fail; and if he fails, he will bring disaster not only on his family but on all who have given him credit. Even if by borrowing he is enabled to meet immediate engagements, he is not safe; for the time is one of panic, and others of his debtors by going to the wall may put him in further difficulties. Shall he ask a friend for a loan? On the one hand, is it not wrong forthwith to bring on himself, his family, and those who have business relations with him, the evils of his failure? On the other hand, is it not wrong to hypothecate the property of his friend, and lead him too, with his belongings and dependents, into similar risks? The loan would probably tide him over his difficulty; in which case would it not be unjust to his creditors did he refrain from asking it? Contrariwise, the loan would very possibly fail to stave off his bankruptcy; in which case is not his action in trying to obtain it, practically fraudulent? Though in extreme cases it may be easy to say which course is the least wrong, how is it possible in all those medium cases where even by the keenest man of business the contingencies cannot be calculated? Take, again, the difficulties that not unfrequently arise from antagonism between family duties and social duties. Here is a tenant farmer whose political principles prompt him to vote in opposition to his landlord. If, being a Liberal, he votes for a Conservative, not only does he by his act say that he thinks what he does not think, but he may perhaps assist what he regards as bad legislation: his vote may by chance turn the election, and on a Parliamentary division a single member may decide the fate of a measure. Even neglecting, as too improbable, such serious consequences, there is the manifest truth that if all who hold like views with himself, are similarly deterred from electoral expression of them, there must result a different balance of power and a different national policy: making it clear that only by adherence of all to their political principles, can the policy he thinks right be maintained. But now, on the other hand, how can he absolve himself from responsibility for the evils which those depending on him may suffer if he fulfils what appears to be a peremptory public duty? Is not his duty to his children even more peremptory? Does not the family precede the State; and does not the welfare of the State

depend on the welfare of the family? May he, then, take a course which, if the threats uttered are carried out, will eject him from his farm; and so cause inability, perhaps temporary, perhaps prolonged, to feed his children? The contingent evils are infinitely varied in their ratios. In one case the imperativeness of the public duty is great and the evil that may come on dependents small; in another case the political issue is of trivial moment and the possible injury which the family may suffer is great; and between these extremes there are all gradations. Further, the degrees of probability of each result, public and private, range from the nearly certain to the almost impossible. Admitting, then, that it is wrong to act in a way likely to injure the State; and admitting that it is wrong to act in a way likely to injure the family; we have to recognize the fact that in countless cases no one can decide by which of the alternative courses the least wrong is likely to be done.

These instances will sufficiently show that in conduct at large, including men's dealings with themselves, with their families, with their friends, with their debtors and creditors, and with the public, it usually happens that whatever course is taken entails some pain somewhere; forming a deduction from the pleasure achieved, and making the course in so far not absolutely right. Further, they will show that throughout a considerable part of conduct, no guiding principle, no method of estimation, enables us to say whether a proposed course is even relatively right; as causing, proximately and remotely, specially and generally, the greatest surplus of good over evil.

§ 104. And now we are prepared for dealing in a systematic way with the distinction between Absolute Ethics and Relative Ethics.

Scientific truths, of whatever order, are reached by eliminating perturbing or conflicting factors, and recognizing only fundamental factors. When, by dealing with fundamental factors in the abstract, not as presented in actual phenomena but as presented in ideal separation, general laws have been ascertained, it becomes possible to draw inferences in concrete cases by taking into account incidental factors. But it is only by first ignoring

these and recognizing the essential elements alone, that we can discover the essential truths sought. Take, in illustration, the progress of mechanics from its empirical form to its rational form.

All have occasional experience of the fact that a person pushed on one side beyond a certain degree, loses his balance and falls. It is observed that a stone flung or an arrow shot, does not proceed in a straight line, but comes to the earth after pursuing a course which deviates more and more from its original course. When trying to break a stick across the knee, it is found that success is easier if the stick is seized at considerable distances from the knee on each side than if seized close to the knee. Daily use of a spear draws attention to the truth that by thrusting its point under a stone and depressing the shaft, the stone may be raised the more readily the further away the hand is towards the end. Here, then, are sundry experiences, eventually grouped into empirical generalizations, which serve to guide conduct in certain simple cases. How does mechanical science evolve from these experiences? To reach a formula expressing the powers of the lever, it supposes a lever which does not, like the stick, admit of being bent, but is absolutely rigid; and it supposes a fulcrum not having a broad surface, like that of one ordinarily used, but a fulcrum without breadth; and it supposes that the weight to be raised bears on a definite point, instead of bearing over a considerable portion of the lever. Similarly with the leaning body, which, passing a certain inclination, overbalances. Before the truth respecting the relations of centre of gravity and base can be formulated, it must be assumed that the surface on which the body stands is unyielding; that the edge of the body itself is unyielding; and that its mass, while made to lean more and more, does not change its form — conditions not fulfilled in the cases commonly observed. And so, too, is it with the projectile: determination of its course by deduction from mechanical laws, primarily ignores all deviations caused by its shape and by the resistance of the air. The science of rational mechanics is a science which consists of such ideal truths, and can come into existence only by thus dealing with ideal cases. It remains impossible

so long as attention is restricted to concrete cases presenting all the complications of friction, plasticity, and so forth. But now, after disentangling certain fundamental mechanical truths, it becomes possible by their help to guide actions better; and it becomes possible to guide them still better, when as presently happens, the complicating elements from which they have been disentangled are themselves taken into account. At an advanced stage, the modifying effects of friction are allowed for, and the inferences are qualified to the requisite extent. The theory of the pulley is corrected in its application to actual cases by recognizing the rigidity of cordage; the effects of which are formulated. The stabilities of masses, determinable in the abstract by reference to the centres of gravity of the masses in relation to the bases, come to be determined in the concrete by including also their characters in respect of cohesion. The courses of projectiles having been theoretically settled as though they moved through a vacuum, are afterwards settled in more exact correspondence with fact by taking into account atmospheric resistance. And thus we see illustrated the relation between certain absolute truths of mechanical science, and certain relative truths which involve them. We are shown that no scientific establishment of relative truths is possible, until the absolute truths have been formulated independently. We see that mechanical science fitted for dealing with the real, can arise only after ideal mechanical science has arisen.

All this holds of moral science. As by early and rude experiences there were inductively reached, vague but partially-true notions respecting the overbalancing of bodies, the motions of missiles, the actions of levers; so by early and rude experiences there were inductively reached, vague but partially-true notions respecting the effects of men's behaviour on themselves, on one another, and on society: to a certain extent serving in the last case, as in the first, for the guidance of conduct. Moreover, as this rudimentary mechanical knowledge, though still remaining empirical, becomes during early stages of civilization at once more definite and more extensive; so during early stages of civilization these ethical ideas, still retaining their empirical character,

increase in precision and multiplicity. But just as we have seen that mechanical knowledge of the empirical sort can evolve into mechanical science, only by first omitting all qualifying circumstances, and generalizing in absolute ways the fundamental laws of forces; so here we have to see that empirical ethics can evolve into rational ethics only by first neglecting all complicating incidents, and formulating the laws of right action apart from the obscuring effects of special conditions. And the final implication is that just as the system of mechanical truths, conceived in ideal separation as absolute, becomes applicable to real mechanical problems in such way that making allowance for all incidental circumstances there can be reached conclusions far nearer to the truth than could otherwise be reached; so, a system of ideal ethical truths, expressing the absolutely right, will be applicable to the questions of our transitional state in such ways that, allowing for the friction of an incomplete life and the imperfection of existing natures, we may ascertain with approximate correctness what is the relatively right.

§ 106. And now let it be observed that the conception of ethics thus set forth, strange as many will think it, is one which really lies latent in the beliefs of moralists at large. Though not definitely acknowledged, it is vaguely implied in many of their propositions.

From early times downwards we find in ethical speculations, references to the ideal man, his acts, his feelings, his judgments. When Socrates said that well-doing is the thing to be chiefly studied, and that he achieved it who devoted to the study searching and labour, he made the actions of the superior man his standard, since he gave no other. Plato, in *Minos*, asserts that "the authoritative rescripts or laws are those laid down by the artists or men of knowledge in that department"; and the doctrine contained in *Laches* is that only "the One Wise Man can estimate the good or evil, or the comparative value of two alternative ends in each individual case": an ideal man is postulated. Aristotle says: "For it is the man whose condition, whether moral or bodily, is in each case perfect who in each case judges rightly,

and at once perceives the truth. . . . And herein it is that the perfect man may be said to differ most widely from all others, in that in all such cases he at once perceives the truth, being, as it were, the rule and measure of its application." While observing that the Stoics, like other ancient philosophers, failing to distinguish properly between intellect and feeling, identified wisdom with goodness, we see that they, too, made the perfect man the measure of rectitude. And Epicurus, also, regards the wise man as the only one who can achieve a happy life — "he alone knows how to do the right thing in the right way."

If in modern times, influenced by theological dogmas concerning human sinfulness, and by a theory of divinely prescribed conduct, moralists have not so frequently referred to an ideal, yet various references are traceable. We may see one in the dictum of Kant — "Act only on that maxim whereby thou canst at the same time will that it should become a universal law." For this implies the thought of a society in which the maxim is acted upon by all and universal benefit recognized as the effect: there is a conception of ideal conduct under ideal conditions. And though Mr. Sidgwick, in the quotation above made from him, implies that Ethics is concerned with man as he is, rather than with man as he should be; yet, in elsewhere speaking of Ethics as dealing with conduct as it should be, rather than with conduct as it is, he postulates ideal conduct and indirectly the ideal man. On his first page, speaking of Ethics along with Jurisprudence and Politics, he says that they are distinguished "by the characteristic that they attempt to determine not the actual but the ideal — what ought to exist, not what does exist."

It requires only that these various conceptions of an ideal conduct and of an ideal humanity, should be made consistent and definite, to bring them into agreement with the conception above set forth. At present such conceptions are habitually vague. The ideal man having been conceived in terms of the current morality, is thereupon erected into a moral standard by which the goodness of actions may be judged; and the reasoning becomes circular. To make the ideal man serve as a standard, he has to be defined in terms of the conditions which his nature fulfils — in terms of

those objective requirements which must be met before conduct can be right; and the common defect of these conceptions of the ideal man, is that they suppose him out of relation to such conditions.

All the above references to him, direct or indirect, imply that the ideal man is supposed to live and act under existing social conditions. The tacit inquiry is, not what his actions would be under circumstances altogether changed, but what they would be under present circumstances. And this inquiry is futile for two reasons. The co-existence of a perfect man and an imperfect society is impossible; and could the two co-exist, the resulting conduct would not furnish the ethical standard sought. In the first place, given the laws of life as they are, and a man of ideal nature cannot be produced in a society consisting of men having natures remote from the ideal. As well might we expect a child of English type to be born among Negroes, as expect that among the organically immoral, one who is organically moral will arise. Unless it be denied that character results from inherited structure, it must be admitted that since, in any society, each individual descends from a stock which, traced back a few generations, ramifies everywhere through the society, and participates in its average nature, there must, notwithstanding marked individual diversities, be preserved such community as prevents any one from reaching an ideal form while the rest remain far below it. In the second place, ideal conduct such as ethical theory is concerned with, is not possible for the ideal man in the midst of men otherwise constituted. An absolutely just or perfectly sympathetic person, could not live and act according to his nature in a tribe of cannibals. Among people who are treacherous and utterly without scruple, entire truthfulness and openness must bring ruin. If all around recognize only the law of the strongest, one whose nature will not allow him to inflict pain on others, must go to the wall. There requires a certain congruity between the conduct of each member of a society and others' conduct. A mode of action entirely alien to the prevailing modes of action, cannot be successfully persisted in — must eventuate in death to self, or posterity, or both.

Hence it is manifest that we must consider the ideal man as existing in the ideal social state. On the evolution-hypothesis, the two presuppose one another; and only when they co-exist, can there exist that ideal conduct which Absolute Ethics has to formulate, and which Relative Ethics has to take as the standard by which to estimate divergencies from right, or degrees of wrong.

HENRY SIDGWICK

(1838–1900)

THE METHODS OF ETHICS*

BOOK III. CHAPTER XIV. ULTIMATE GOOD

§ 1. At the outset of this treatise[1] I noticed that there are two forms in which the object of ethical inquiry is considered; it is sometimes regarded as a Rule or Rules of Conduct, "the Right," sometimes as an end or ends, "the Good." I pointed out that in the moral consciousness of modern Europe the two notions are *prima facie* distinct; since while it is commonly thought that the obligation to obey moral rules is absolute, it is not commonly held that the whole Good of man lies in such obedience; this view, we may say, is — vaguely and respectfully but unmistakably — repudiated as a Stoical paradox. The ultimate Good or Wellbeing of man is rather regarded as an ulterior result, the connexion of which with his Right Conduct is indeed commonly held to be certain, but is frequently conceived as supernatural, and so beyond the range of independent ethical speculation. But now, if the conclusions of the preceding chapters are to be trusted, it would seem that the practical determination of Right Conduct depends on the determination of Ultimate Good. For we have seen (*a*) that most of the commonly received maxims of Duty — even of those which at first sight appear absolute and independent — are found when closely examined to contain an implicit subordination to the more general principles of Prudence and Benevolence: and (*b*) that no principles except these, and the formal principle of Justice or Equity, can be admitted as at once intuitively clear and certain; while, again, these principles themselves, so far as they are self-evident, may be stated as precepts to seek (1) one's own good on the whole, repressing all seductive impulses prompting

* 1st ed., London, Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1874; 6th ed. 1901.

[1] See *The Methods of Ethics*, Book i., chap. i., § 2.

to undue preference of particular goods, and (2) others' good no less than one's own, repressing any undue preference for one individual over another. Thus we are brought round again to the old question with which ethical speculation in Europe began, "What is the Ultimate Good for man?" — though not in the egoistic form in which the old question was raised. When, however, we examine the controversies to which this question originally led, we see that the investigation which has brought us round to it has tended definitely to exclude one of the answers which early moral reflection was disposed to give to it. For to say that "General Good" consists solely in general Virtue — if we mean by Virtue conformity to such prescriptions and prohibitions as make up the main part of the morality of Common Sense — would obviously involve us in a logical circle; since we have seen that the exact determination of these prescriptions and prohibitions must depend on the definition of this General Good.

Nor, I conceive, can this argument be evaded by adopting the view of what I have called "Æsthetic Intuitionism" and regarding Virtues as excellences of conduct clearly discernible by trained insight, although their nature does not admit of being stated in definite formulæ. For our notions of special virtues do not really become more independent by becoming more indefinite: they still contain, though perhaps more latently, the same reference to "Good" or "Wellbeing" as an ultimate standard. This appears clearly when we consider any virtue in relation to the cognate vice — or at least *non-virtue* — into which it tends to pass over when pushed to an extreme, or exhibited under inappropriate conditions. For example, Common Sense may seem to regard Liberality, Frugality, Courage, Placability, as intrinsically desirable: but when we consider their relation respectively to Profusion, Meanness, Foolhardiness, Weakness, we find that Common Sense draws the line in each case not by immediate intuition, but by reference either to some definite maxim of duty, or to the general notion of "Good" or Wellbeing: and similarly when we ask at what point Candour, Generosity, Humility cease to be virtues by becoming "excessive." Other qualities com-

monly admired, such as Energy, Zeal, Self-control, Thoughtfulness, are obviously regarded as virtues only when they are directed to good ends. In short, the only so-called Virtues which can be thought to be essentially and always such, and incapable of excess, are such qualities as Wisdom, Universal Benevolence, and (in a sense) Justice; of which the notions manifestly involve this notion of Good, supposed already determinate. Wisdom is insight into Good and the means to Good; Benevolence is exhibited in the purposive actions called "doing Good": Justice (when regarded as essentially and always a Virtue) lies in distributing Good (or evil) impartially according to right rules. If then we are asked what is this Good which it is excellent to know, to bestow on others, to distribute impartially, it would be obviously absurd to reply that it is just this knowledge, these beneficent purposes, this impartial distribution.

Nor, again, can I perceive that this difficulty is in any way met by regarding Virtue as a quality of "character" rather than of "conduct," and expressing the moral law in the form, "Be this," instead of the form, "Do this." [1] From a practical point of view, indeed, I fully recognise the importance of urging that men should aim at an ideal of character, and consider action in its effects on character. But I cannot infer from this that character and its elements — faculties, habits, or dispositions of any kind — are the constituents of Ultimate Good. It seems to me that the opposite is implied in the very conception of a faculty or disposition; it can only be defined as a tendency to act or feel in a certain way under certain conditions; and such a tendency appears to me clearly not valuable in itself but for the acts and feelings in which it takes effect, or for the ulterior consequences of these, — which consequences, again, cannot be regarded as Ultimate Good, so long as they are merely conceived as modifications of faculties, dispositions, etc. When, therefore, I say that effects on character are important, it is a summary way of saying that by the laws of our mental constitution the present act or feeling is a cause tending to modify importantly our acts and feelings in the indefinite future: the comparatively permanent result supposed to be

[1] Cf. Leslie Stephen's *Science of Ethics*, chap. iv., § 16.

produced in the mind or soul, being a tendency that will show itself in an indefinite number of particular acts and feelings, may easily be more important, in relation to the ultimate end, than a single act or the transient feeling of a single moment: but its comparative permanence appears to me no ground for regarding it as itself a constituent of ultimate good.

§ 2. So far, however, I have been speaking only of particular virtues, as exhibited in conduct judged to be objectively right: and it may be argued that this is too external a view of the Virtue that claims to constitute Ultimate Good. It may be said that the difficulty that I have been urging vanishes if we penetrate beyond the particular virtues to the root and essence of virtue in general, — the determination of the will to do whatever is judged to be right and to aim at realising whatever is judged to be best; — since this subjective rightness or goodness of will, being independent of knowledge of what is objectively right or good, is independent of that presupposition of Good as already known and determined, which we have seen to be implied in the common conceptions of virtue as manifested in outward acts. I admit that if subjective rightness or goodness of Will is affirmed to be the Ultimate Good, the affirmation does not exactly involve the logical difficulty that I have been urging. None the less is it fundamentally opposed to Common Sense; since the very notion of subjective rightness or goodness of will implies an objective standard, which it directs us to seek, but does not profess to supply. It would be a palpable and violent paradox to set before the right-seeking mind no end except this right-seeking itself, and to affirm this to be the sole Ultimate Good, denying that any effects of right volition can be in themselves good, except the subjective rightness of future volitions, whether of self or of others. It is true that no rule can be recognised, by any reasonable individual, as more authoritative than the rule of doing what he judges to be right; for, in deliberating with a view to my own immediate action, I cannot distinguish between doing what is objectively right, and realising my own subjective conception of rightness. But we are continually forced to make the distinction as regards the actions of others and to judge that conduct may be

objectively wrong though subjectively right: and we continually judge conduct to be objectively wrong because it tends to cause pain and loss of happiness to others, — apart from any effect on the subjective rightness of their volitions. It is as so judging that we commonly recognise the mischief and danger of fanaticism: — meaning by a fanatic a man who resolutely and unswervingly carries out his own conception of rightness, when it is a plainly mistaken conception.

The same result may be reached even without supposing so palpable a divorce between subjective and objective rightness of volition as is implied in the notion of fanaticism. As I have already pointed out,[1] though the "dictates of Reason" are always to be obeyed, it does not follow that "the dictation of Reason" — the predominance of consciously moral over non-moral motives — is to be promoted without limits; and indeed Common Sense appears to hold that some things are likely to be better done, if they are done from other motives than conscious obedience to practical Reason or Conscience. It thus becomes a practical question how far the dictation of Reason, the predominance of moral choice and moral effort in human life, is a result to be aimed at: and the admission of this question implies that conscious rightness of volition is not the sole ultimate good. On the whole, then, we may conclude that neither (1) subjective rightness or goodness of volition, as distinct from objective, nor (2) virtuous character, except as manifested or realised in virtuous conduct, can be regarded as constituting Ultimate Good: while, again, we are precluded from identifying Ultimate Good with virtuous conduct, because our conceptions of virtuous conduct, under the different heads or aspects denoted by the names of the particular virtues, have been found to presuppose the prior determination of the notion of Good — that Good which virtuous conduct is conceived as producing or promoting or rightly distributing.

And what has been said of Virtue, seems to me still more manifestly true of the other talents, gifts, and graces which make up the common notion of human excellence or Perfection. However

[1] *The Methods of Ethics*, chap. xi., § 3; see also chap. xii., § 3.

immediately the excellent quality of such gifts and skills may be recognised and admired, reflection shows that they are only valuable on account of the good or desirable conscious life in which they are or will be actualised, or which will be somehow promoted by their exercise.

§ 3. Shall we then say that Ultimate Good is Good or Desirable conscious or sentient Life — of which Virtuous action is one element, but not the sole constituent? This seems in harmony with Common Sense; and the fact that particular virtues and talents and gifts are largely valued as means to ulterior good does not necessarily prevent us from regarding their exercise as also an element of Ultimate Good: just as the fact that physical action, nutrition, and repose, duly proportioned and combined, are means to the maintenance of our animal life, does not prevent us from regarding them as indispensable elements of such life. Still it seems difficult to conceive any kind of activity or process as both means and end, from precisely the same point of view and in respect of precisely the same quality: and in both the cases above mentioned it is, I think, easy to distinguish the aspect in which the activities or processes in question are to be regarded as means from that in which they are to be regarded as in themselves good or desirable. Let us examine this first in the case of the physical processes. It is in their purely physical aspect, as complex processes of corporeal change, that they are means to the maintenance of life: but so long as we confine our attention to their corporeal aspect, — regarding them merely as complex movements of certain particles of organised matter, — it seems impossible to attribute to these movements, considered in themselves, either goodness or badness. I cannot conceive it to be an ultimate end of rational action to secure that these complex movements should be of one kind rather than another, or that they should be continued for a longer rather than a shorter period. In short, if a certain quality of human Life is that which is ultimately desirable, it must belong to human Life regarded on its psychical side, or, briefly, Consciousness.

But again: it is not all life regarded on its psychical side which we can judge to be ultimately desirable: since psychical life as

known to us includes pain as well as pleasure, and so far as it is painful it is not desirable. I cannot therefore accept a view of the wellbeing or welfare of human beings — as of other living things — which is suggested by current zoölogical conceptions and apparently maintained with more or less definiteness by influential writers; according to which, when we attribute goodness or badness to the manner of existence of any living organism, we should be understood to attribute to it a tendency either (1) to self-preservation, or (2) to the preservation of the community or race to which it belongs — so that what "Wellbeing" adds to mere "Being" is just promise of future being. It appears to me that this doctrine needs only to be distinctly contemplated in order to be rejected. If all life were as little desirable as some portions of it have been, in my own experience and in that (I believe) of all or most men, I should judge all tendency to the preservation of it to be unmitigatedly bad. Actually, no doubt, as we generally hold that human life, even as now lived, has on the average, a balance of happiness, we regard what is preservative of life as generally good and what is destructive of life as bad: and I quite admit that a most fundamentally important part of the function of morality consists in maintaining such habits and sentiments as are necessary to the continued existence, in full numbers, of a society of human beings under their actual conditions of life. But this is not because the mere existence of human organisms, even if prolonged to eternity, appears to me in any way desirable; it is only assumed to be so because it is supposed to be accompanied by Consciousness on the whole desirable; it is therefore this Desirable Consciousness which we must regard as ultimate Good.

In the same way, so far as we judge virtuous activity to be a part of Ultimate Good, it is, I conceive, because the consciousness attending it is judged to be in itself desirable for the virtuous agent: though at the same time this consideration does not adequately represent the importance of Virtue to human wellbeing, since we have to consider its value as a means as well as its value as an end. We may make the distinction clearer by considering whether Virtuous life would remain on the whole good for the

virtuous agent, if we suppose it combined with extreme pain. The affirmative answer to this question was strongly supported in Greek philosophical discussion: but it is a paradox from which a modern thinker would recoil: he would hardly venture to assert that the portion of life spent by a martyr in tortures was in itself desirable, — though it might be his duty to suffer the pain with a view to the good of others, and even his interest to suffer it with a view to his own ultimate happiness.

§ 4. If then Ultimate Good can only be conceived as Desirable Consciousness, — including the Consciousness of Virtue as a part but only as a part, — are we to identify this notion with Happiness or Pleasure, and say with the Utilitarians that General Good is General Happiness? Many would at this point of the discussion regard this conclusion as inevitable: to say that all other things called good are only means to the end of making conscious life better or more desirable, seems to them the same as saying that they are means to the end of happiness. But very important distinctions remain to be considered. According to the view taken in a previous chapter,[1] in affirming Ultimate Good to be Happiness or Pleasure, we imply (1) that nothing is desirable except desirable feelings, and (2) that the desirability of each feeling is only directly cognisable by the sentient individual at the time of feeling it, and that therefore this particular judgment of the sentient individual must be taken as final[2] on the question how far each element of feeling has the quality of Ultimate Good. Now no one, I conceive, would estimate in any other way the desirability of feeling considered merely as feeling: but it may be urged that our conscious experience includes besides Feelings, Cognitions and Volitions, and that the desirability of these must be taken into account, and is not to be estimated by the standard above stated. I think, however, that when we reflect on a cognition as a transient fact of an individual's psychical experience, — distinguishing it on the one hand from the feeling that normally

[1] *The Methods of Ethics*, Book ii., chap. ii.

[2] Final, that is, so far as the quality of the present feeling is concerned. I have pointed out that so far as any estimate of the desirability or pleasantness of a feeling involves comparison with feelings only represented in idea, it is liable to be erroneous through imperfections in the representation.

accompanies it, and on the other hand from that relation of the knowing mind to the object known which is implied in the term "true" or "valid cognition," — it is seen to be an element of consciousness quite neutral in respect of desirability: and the same may be said of Volitions, when we abstract from their concomitant feelings, and their relation to an objective norm or ideal, as well as from all their consequences. It is no doubt true that in ordinary thought certain states of consciousness — such as Cognition of Truth, Contemplation of Beauty, Volition to realise Freedom or Virtue — are sometimes judged to be preferable on other grounds than their pleasantness: but the general explanation of this seems to be (as was suggested in Book ii, chap. ii., § 2) that what in such cases we really prefer is not the present consciousness itself, but either effects on future consciousness more or less distinctly foreseen, or else something in the objective relations of the conscious being, not strictly included in his present consciousness.

The second of these alternatives may perhaps be made clearer by some illustrations. A man may prefer the mental state of apprehending truth to the state of half-reliance on generally accredited fictions,[1] while recognising that the former state may be more painful than the latter, and independently of any effect which he expects either state to have upon his subsequent consciousness. Here, on my view, the real object of preference is not the consciousness of knowing truth, considered merely as consciousness, — the element of pleasure or satisfaction in this being more than outweighed by the concomitant pain, — but the relation between the mind and something else, which, as the very notion of "truth" implies, is whatever it is independently of our cognition of it, and which I therefore call objective. This may become more clear if we imagine ourselves learning afterwards that what we took for truth is not really such: for in this case we should certainly feel that our preference had been mistaken; whereas if our choice had really been between two elements of transient consciousness, its reasonableness could not be affected by any subsequent discovery.

[1] Cf. W. E. H. Lecky's *History of European Morals*, pp. 52 *seqq.*

Similarly, a man may prefer freedom and penury to a life of luxurious servitude, not because the pleasant consciousness of being free outweighs in prospect all the comforts and securities that the other life would afford, but because he has a predominant aversion to that relation between his will and the will of another which we call slavery: or, again, a philosopher may choose what he conceives as "inner freedom" — the consistent self-determination of the will — rather than the gratifications of appetite; though recognising that the latter are more desirable, considered merely as transient feelings. In either case, he will be led to regard his preference as mistaken, if he be afterwards persuaded that his conception of Freedom or self-determination was illusory; that we are all slaves of circumstances, destiny, etc.

So again, the preference of conformity to Virtue, or contemplation of Beauty, to a state of consciousness recognised as more pleasant seems to depend on a belief that one's conception of Virtue or Beauty corresponds to an ideal to some extent objective and valid for all minds. Apart from any consideration of future consequences, we should generally agree that a man who sacrificed happiness to an erroneous conception of Virtue or Beauty made a mistaken choice.

Still, it may be said that this is merely a question of definition: that we may take "conscious life" in a wide sense, so as to include the objective relations of the conscious being implied in our notions of Virtue, Truth, Beauty, Freedom; and that from this point of view we may regard cognition of Truth, contemplation of Beauty, Free or Virtuous action, as in some measure preferable alternatives to Pleasure or Happiness — even though we admit that Happiness must be included as a part of Ultimate Good. In this case the principle of Rational Benevolence, which was stated in the last chapter as an indubitable intuition of the practical Reason, would not direct us to the pursuit of universal happiness alone, but of these "ideal goods" as well, as ends ultimately desirable for mankind generally.

§ 5. I think, however, that this view ought not to commend itself to the sober judgment of reflective persons. In order to show this, I must ask the reader to use the same twofold pro-

cedure that I before requested him to employ in considering the absolute and independent validity of common moral precepts. I appeal firstly to his intuitive judgment after due consideration of the question when fairly placed before it: and secondly to a comprehensive comparison of the ordinary judgments of mankind. As regards the first argument, to me at least it seems clear after reflection that these objective relations of the conscious subject, when distinguished from the consciousness accompanying and resulting from them, are not ultimately and intrinsically desirable; any more than material or other objects are, when considered apart from any relation to conscious existence. Admitting that we have actual experience of such preferences as have just been described, of which the ultimate object is something that is not merely consciousness: it still seems to me that when (to use Butler's phrase) we "sit down in a cool hour," we can only justify to ourselves the importance that we attach to any of these objects by considering its conduciveness, in one way or another, to the happiness of sentient beings.

The second argument, that refers to the common sense of mankind, obviously cannot be made completely cogent; since, as above stated, several cultivated persons do habitually judge that knowledge, art, etc. — not to speak of Virtue — are ends independently of the pleasure derived from them. But we may urge not only that all these elements of "ideal good" are productive of pleasure in various ways; but also that they seem to obtain the commendation of Common Sense, roughly speaking, in proportion to the degree of this productiveness. This seems obviously true of Beauty; and will hardly be denied in respect of any kind of social ideal: it is paradoxical to maintain that any degree of Freedom, or any form of social order, would still be commonly regarded as desirable even if we were certain that it had no tendency to promote the general happiness. The case of Knowledge is rather more complex; but certainly Common Sense is most impressed with the value of knowledge, when its "fruitfulness" has been demonstrated. It is, however, aware that experience has frequently shown how knowledge, long fruitless, may become unexpectedly fruitful, and how light may be shed on one part of

the field of knowledge from another apparently remote: and even if any particular branch of scientific pursuit could be shown to be devoid of even this indirect utility, it would still deserve some respect on utilitarian grounds, both as furnishing to the inquirer the refined and innocent pleasures of curiosity, and because the intellectual disposition which it exhibits and sustains is likely on the whole to produce fruitful knowledge. Still in cases approximating to this last, Common Sense is somewhat disposed to complain of the misdirection of valuable effort; so that the meed of honour commonly paid to Science seems to be graduated, though perhaps unconsciously, by a tolerably exact utilitarian scale. Certainly the moment the legitimacy of any branch of scientific inquiry is seriously disputed, as in the recent case of vivisection, the controversy on both sides is generally conducted on an avowedly utilitarian basis.

The case of Virtue requires special consideration: since the encouragement in each other of virtuous impulses and dispositions is a main aim of men's ordinary moral discourse; so that even to raise the question whether this encouragement can go too far has a paradoxical air. Still, our experience includes rare and exceptional cases in which the concentration of effort on the cultivation of virtue has seemed to have effects adverse to general happiness, through being intensified to the point of moral fanaticism, and so involving a neglect of other conditions of happiness. If, then, we admit as actual or possible such "infelicific" effects of the cultivation of Virtue, I think we shall also generally admit that, in the case supposed, conduciveness to general happiness should be the criterion for deciding how far the cultivation of Virtue should be carried.

At the same time it must be allowed that we find in Common Sense an aversion to admit Happiness (when explained to mean a sum of pleasures) to be the sole ultimate end and standard of right conduct. But this, I think, can be fully accounted for by the following considerations.

I. The term Pleasure is not commonly used so as to include clearly *all* kinds of consciousness which we desire to retain or reproduce: in ordinary usage it suggests too prominently the

coarser and commoner kinds of such feelings; and it is difficult even for those who are trying to use it scientifically to free their minds altogether from the associations of ordinary usage, and to mean by Pleasure only Desirable Consciousness or Feeling of whatever kind. Again, our knowledge of human life continually suggests to us instances of pleasures which will inevitably involve as concomitant or consequent either a greater amount of pain, or a loss of more important pleasures: and we naturally shrink from including even hypothetically in our conception of ultimate good these — in Bentham's phrase — "impure" pleasures; especially since we have, in many cases, moral or æsthetic instincts warning us against such pleasures.

II. We have seen [1] that many important pleasures can only be felt on condition of our experiencing desires for other things than pleasure. Thus the very acceptance of Pleasure as the ultimate end of conduct involves the practical rule that it is not always to be made the conscious end. Hence, even if we are considering merely the good of one human being taken alone, excluding from our view all effects of his conduct on others, still the reluctance of Common Sense to regard pleasure as the sole thing ultimately desirable may be justified by the consideration that human beings tend to be less happy if they are exclusively occupied with the desire of personal happiness. *E. g.* (as was before shown) we shall miss the valuable pleasures which attend the exercise of the benevolent affections if we do not experience genuinely disinterested impulses to procure happiness for others (which are, in fact, implied in the notion of "benevolent affections").

III. But again, I hold, as was expounded in the preceding chapter, that disinterested benevolence is not only thus generally in harmony with rational Self-love, but also in another sense and independently rational: that is, Reason shows me that if my happiness is desirable and a good, the equal happiness of any other person must be equally desirable. Now, when Happiness is spoken of as the sole ultimate good of man, the idea most commonly suggested is that each individual is to seek his own happiness at the expense (if necessary) or, at any rate, to the neglect of

[1] *The Methods of Ethics*, Book i., chap. iv.; cf. Book ii., chap. iii.

that of others: and this offends both our sympathetic and our rational regard for others' happiness. It is, in fact, rather the end of Egoistic than of Universalistic Hedonism, to which Common Sense feels an aversion. And certainly one's individual happiness is, in many respects, an unsatisfactory mark for one's supreme aim, apart from any direct collision into which the exclusive pursuit of it may bring us with rational or sympathetic Benevolence. It does not possess the characteristics which, as Aristotle says, we "divine" to belong to Ultimate Good: being (so far, at least, as it can be empirically foreseen) so narrow and limited, of such necessarily brief duration, and so shifting and insecure while it lasts. But Universal Happiness, desirable consciousness or feeling for the innumerable multitude of sentient beings, present and to come, seems an End that satisfies our imagination by its vastness, and sustains our resolution by its comparative security.

It may, however, be said that if we require the individual to sacrifice his own happiness to the greater happiness of others on the ground that it is reasonable to do so, we really assign to the individual a different ultimate end from that which we lay down as the ultimate Good of the universe of sentient beings: since we direct him to take, as ultimate, Happiness for the Universe, but Conformity to Reason for himself. I admit the substantial truth of this statement, though I should avoid the language as tending to obscure the distinction before explained between "obeying the dictates" and "prompting the dictation" of reason. But granting the alleged difference, I do not see that it constitutes an argument against the view here maintained, since the individual is essentially and fundamentally different from the larger whole — the universe of sentient beings — of which he is conscious of being a part; just because he has a known relation to similar parts of the same whole, while the whole itself has no such relation. I accordingly see no inconsistency in holding that while it *would* be reasonable for the aggregate of sentient beings, if it could act collectively, to aim at its own happiness only as an ultimate end, — and would be reasonable for any individual to do the same, if he were the only sentient being in the universe, — it may yet be

actually reasonable for an individual to sacrifice his own Good or happiness for the greater happiness of others.[1]

At the same time I admit that, in the earlier age of ethical thought which Greek philosophy represents, men sometimes judged an act to be "good" *for the agent*, even while recognising that its consequences would be on the whole painful to him, — as (*e. g.*) a heroic exchange of a life full of happiness for a painful death at the call of duty. I attribute this partly to a confusion of thought between what it is reasonable for an individual to desire, when he considers his own existence alone, and what he must recognise as reasonably to be desired, when he takes the point of view of a larger whole: partly, again, to a faith deeply rooted in the moral consciousness of mankind, that there cannot be really and ultimately any conflict between the two kinds of reasonableness.[2] But when "Reasonable Self-love" has been clearly distinguished from Conscience, as it is by Butler and his followers, we find it is naturally understood to mean desire for one's own Happiness: so that in fact the interpretation of "one's own good," which was almost peculiar in ancient thought to the Cyrenaic and Epicurean heresies, is adopted by some of the most orthodox of modern moralists. Indeed it often does not seem to have occurred to these latter that this notion can have any other interpretation.[3] If, then, when any one hypothetically concentrates his attention on himself, Good is naturally and almost inevitably conceived to be Pleasure, we may reasonably conclude that the Good of any number of similar beings, whatever their mutual relations may be, cannot be essentially different in quality.

IV. But lastly, from the universal point of view no less than from that of the individual, it seems true that Happiness is likely

[1] I ought at the same time to say that I hold it no less reasonable for an individual to take his own happiness as his ultimate end. This "Dualism of the Practical Reason" will be further discussed in the concluding chapter of the treatise.

[2] We may illustrate this double explanation by a reference to some of Plato's Dialogues, such as the *Gorgias*, where the ethical argument has a singularly mixed effect on the mind. Partly, it seems to us more or less dexterous sophistry, playing on a confusion of thought latent in the common notion of good: partly, a noble and stirring expression of a profound moral faith.

[3] Cf. D. Stewart's *Philosophy of the Active and Moral Powers*, Book ii., chap. i.

to be better attained if the extent to which we set ourselves consciously to aim at it be carefully restricted. And this not only because action is likely to be more effective if our effort is temporarily concentrated on the realisation of more limited ends — though this is no doubt an important reason: — but also because the fullest development of happy life for each individual seems to require that he should have other external objects of interest besides the happiness of other conscious beings. And thus we may conclude that the pursuit of the ideal objects before mentioned, Virtue, Truth, Freedom, Beauty, etc., *for their own sakes*, is indirectly and secondarily, though not primarily and absolutely, rational; on account not only of the happiness that will result from their attainment, but also of that which springs from their disinterested pursuit. While yet if we ask for a final criterion of the comparative value of the different objects of men's enthusiastic pursuit, and of the limits within which each may legitimately engross the attention of mankind, we shall none the less conceive it to depend upon the degree in which they respectively conduce to Happiness.

If, however, this view be rejected, it remains to consider whether we can frame any other coherent account of Ultimate Good. If we are not to systematise human activities by taking Universal Happiness as their common end, on what other principles are we to systematise them? It should be observed that these principles must not only enable us to compare among themselves the values of the different non-Hedonistic ends which we have been considering, but must also provide a common standard for comparing these values with that of Happiness; unless we are prepared to adopt the paradoxical position of rejecting happiness as absolutely valueless. For we have a practical need of determining not only whether we should pursue Truth rather than Beauty, or Freedom or some ideal constitution of society rather than either, or perhaps desert all of these for the life of worship and religious contemplation; but also how far we should follow any of these lines of endeavour, when we foresee among its consequences the pains of human or other sentient beings, or even the loss of pleasures that might otherwise have been enjoyed by them.

I have failed to find — and am unable to construct — any systematic answer to this question that appears to me deserving of serious consideration: and hence I am finally led to the conclusion (which at the close of the last chapter seemed to be premature) that the Intuitional method rigorously applied yields as its final result the doctrine of pure Universalistic Hedonism,[1] — which it is convenient to denote by the single word, Utilitarianism.

[1] I have before noticed (Book ii., chap. iii., p. 134) the metaphysical objection taken by certain writers to the view that Happiness is Ultimate Good; on the ground that Happiness (= sum of pleasures) can only be realised in successive parts, whereas a "Chief Good" must be "something of which some being can be conceived in possession" — something, that is, which he can have all at once. On considering this objection it seemed to me that, in so far as it is even plausible, its plausibility depends on the exact form of the notion "a Chief Good" (or "Summum Bonum"), which is perhaps inappropriate as applied to Happiness. I have therefore in this chapter used the notion of "Ultimate Good": as I can see no shadow of reason for affirming that that which is Good or Desirable *per se*, and not as a means to some further end, must *necessarily* be capable of being possessed all at once. I can understand that a man may aspire after a Good of this latter kind: but so long as Time is a necessary form of human existence, it can hardly be surprising that human good should be subject to the condition of being realised in successive parts.

FRANCIS HERBERT BRADLEY

(1846-——)

ETHICAL STUDIES*

ESSAY II. WHY SHOULD I BE MORAL?

WHY should I be moral?[1] The question is natural, and yet seems strange. It appears to be one we ought to ask, and yet we feel, when we ask it, that we are wholly removed from the moral point of view.

To ask the question Why? is rational; for reason teaches us to do nothing blindly, nothing without end or aim. She teaches us that what is good must be good for something, and that what is good for nothing is not good at all. And so we take it as certain that there is an end on one side, means on the other; and that only if the end is good, and the means conduce to it, have we a right to say the means are good. It is rational, then, always to inquire, Why should I do it?

But here the question seems strange. For morality (and she too is reason) teaches us that, if we look on her only as good for something else, we never in that case have seen her at all. She says that she is an end to be desired for her own sake, and not as a means to something beyond. Degrade her, and she disappears; and to keep her, we must love and not merely use her. And so at the question Why? we are in trouble, for that does assume, and does take for granted, that virtue in this sense is unreal, and what we believe is false. Both virtue and the asking Why? seem

* 1st ed., London, Henry S. King & Co., 1876.

[1] Let me observe here that the word "moral" has three meanings, which must be throughout these pages distinguished by the context. (1.) Moral is opposed to *non*-moral. The moral world, or world of morality, is opposed to the natural world, where morality cannot exist. (2.) Within the moral world of moral agents "moral" is opposed to *im*moral. (3.) Again, within the moral world, and the moral part of the moral world, "moral" is further restricted to the *personal* side of the moral life and the moral institutions. It stands for the *inner* relation of this or that will to the universal, not to the whole, outer and inner, realization of morality.

rational, and yet incompatible one with the other; and the better course will be, not forthwith to reject virtue in favour of the question, but rather to inquire concerning the nature of the Why?

Why should I be virtuous? Why should I? Could anything be more modest? Could anything be less assuming? It is not a dogma; it is only a question. And yet a question may contain (perhaps must contain) an assumption more or less hidden; or, in other words, a dogma. Let us see what is assumed in the asking of our question.

In "Why should I be moral?" the "Why should I?" was another way of saying, What good is virtue? or rather, For what is it good? and we saw that in asking, Is virtue good as a means, and how so? we do assume that virtue is not good, except as a means. The dogma at the root of the question is hence clearly either (1) the general statement that only means are good; or (2) the particular assertion of this in the case of virtue.

To explain; the question For what? Whereto? is either universally applicable, or not so. It holds everywhere, or we mean it to hold only here. Let us suppose, in the first place, that it is meant to hold everywhere.

Then (1) we are taking for granted that nothing is good in itself; that only the means to something else are good; that "good," in a word, = "good for," and good for something else. Such is the general canon by which virtue would have to be measured.

No one perhaps would explicitly put forward such a canon, and yet it may not be waste of time to examine it.

The good is a means: a means is a means to something else, and this is an end. Is the end good? No; if we hold to our general canon, it is not good as an end: the good was always good for something else, and was a means. To be good, the end must be a means, and so on forever in a process which has no limit. If we ask now What is good? we must answer, There is nothing which is *not* good, for there is nothing which may not be regarded as conducing to something outside itself. Everything is relative to something else. And the essence of the good is to exist by virtue of something else and something else forever. Everything

is something else, is the result which at last we are brought to, if we insist on pressing our canon as universally applicable.

But the above is not needed, perhaps; for those who introduced the question Why? did not think of things in general. The good for them was not an infinite process of idle distinction. Their interest is practical, and they do and must understand by the good (which they call a means) some means to an end in itself; which latter they assume, and unconsciously fix in whatever is agreeable to themselves. If we said to them, for example, "Virtue is a means, and so is everything besides, and a means to everything else besides. Virtue is a means to pleasure, pain, health, disease, wealth, poverty, and is a good, because a means; and so also with pain, poverty, etc. They are all good, because all means. Is this what you mean by the question Why?" they would answer No. And they would answer No, because something has been taken as an end, and therefore good; and has been assumed dogmatically.

The universal application of the question For what? or Whereto? is, we see, repudiated. The question does not hold good everywhere, and we must now consider, secondly, its particular application to virtue.

(2) Something is here assumed to be the end; and further, this is assumed *not* to be virtue; and thus the question is founded, "Is virtue a means to a given end, which end is the good? Is virtue good? and why? *i. e.* as conducing to what good, is it good?" The dogma, A or B or C is a good in itself, justifies the inquiry, Is D a means to A, B, or C? And it is the dogmatic character of the question that we wished to point out. Its rationality, put as if universal, is tacitly assumed to end with a certain province; and our answer must be this: *If* your formula will not (on your own admission) apply to everything, what ground have you for supposing it to apply to virtue? "Be virtuous that you may be happy (*i. e.* pleased)"; then why be happy, and not rather virtuous? "The pleasure of all is an end." *Why* all? "Mine." *Why* mine? Your reply must be, that you take it to be so, and are prepared to argue on the thesis that something not virtue is the end in itself. And so are we; and we shall try to show that this is

erroneous. But even if we fail in that, we have, I hope, made it clear that the question Why should I be moral? rests on the assertion of an end in itself, which is not morality; and a point of this importance must not be taken for granted.

It is quite true that to ask Why should I be moral? is *ipso facto* to take one view of morality, is to assume that virtue is a means to something not itself. But it is a mistake to suppose that the general asking of Why? affords any presumption in favour of, or against, any one theory. If any theory could stand upon the What for? as a rational formula, which must always hold good and be satisfied; then, to that extent, no doubt it would have an advantage. But we have seen that all doctrines alike must reject the What for? and agree in this rejection, if they agree in nothing else; since they all must have an end which is not a mere means. And if so, is it not foolish to suppose that its giving a reason for virtue is any argument in favour of Hedonism, when for its own end it can give no reason at all? Is it not clear that, if you have any Ethics, you must have an end which is above the Why? in the sense of What for? and that, if this is so, the question is now, as it was two thousand years ago, Granted that there is an end, *what* is this end? And the asking that question, as reason and history both tell us, is not in itself the presupposing of a Hedonistic answer, or any other answer.

The claim of pleasure to be the end, we are to discuss in another paper. But what is clear at first sight is, that to take virtue as a mere means to an ulterior end is in direct antagonism to the voice of the moral consciousness.

That consciousness, when unwarped by selfishness and not blinded by sophistry, is convinced that to ask for the Why? is simple immorality; to do good for its own sake is virtue, to do it for some ulterior end or object, not itself good, is never virtue; and never to act but for the sake of an end, other than doing well and right, is the mark of vice. And the theory which sees in virtue, as in money-getting, a means which is mistaken for an end, contradicts the voice which proclaims that virtue not only does seem to be, but is, an end in itself.

Taking our stand then, as we hope, on this common conscious-

ness, what answer can we give when the question, Why should I be moral? in the sense of, What will it advantage me? is put to us? Here we shall do well, I think, to avoid all praises of the pleasantness of virtue. We may believe that it transcends all possible delights of vice, but it would be well to remember that we desert a moral point of view, that we degrade and prostitute virtue, when to those who do not love her for herself we bring ourselves to recommend her for the sake of her pleasures. Against the base mechanical *βαναυσία*, which meets us on all sides, with its "what is the use" of goodness, or beauty, or truth? there is but one fitting answer from the friends of science, or art, or religion and virtue, "We do not know, and we do not care."

As a direct answer to the question we should not say more: but, putting ourselves at our questioner's point of view, we may ask in return, Why should I be immoral? Is it not disadvantageous to be so? We can ask, Is your view consistent? Does it satisfy you, and give you what you want? And if you are satisfied, and so far as you are satisfied, do see whether it is not because, and so far as, you are false to your theory; so far as you are living not directly with a view to the pleasant, but with a view to something else, or with no view at all, but, as you would call it, without any "reason." We believe that, in your heart, your end is what ours is, but that about this end you not only are sorely mistaken, but in your heart you feel and know it; or at least would do so, if you would only reflect. And more than this I think we ought not to say.

What more are we to say? If a man asserts total scepticism, you cannot argue with him. You can show that he contradicts himself; but if he says, "I do not care" — there is an end of it. So, too, if a man says, "I shall do what I like, because I happen to like it; and as for ends, I recognize none" — you may indeed show him that his conduct is in fact otherwise; and if he will assert anything as an end, if he will but say, "I have no end but myself," then you may argue with him, and try to prove that he is making a mistake as to the nature of the end he alleges. But if he says, "I care not whether I am moral or rational, nor how much I contradict myself," then argument ceases. We, who have the

power, believe that what is rational (if it is not yet) at least is to be real, and decline to recognize anything else. For standing on reason we can give, of course, no further reason, but we push our reason against what seems to oppose it, and soon force all to see that moral obligations do not vanish, where they cease to be felt, or are denied.

Has the question, Why should I be moral? no sense then, and is no positive answer possible? No, the question has no sense at all; it is simply unmeaning, unless it is equivalent to, *Is* morality an end in itself; and, if so, how and in what way is it an end? Is morality the same as the end for man, so that the two are convertible; or is morality one side, or aspect, or element of some end which is larger than itself? Is it the whole end from all points of view, or is it one view of the whole? Is the artist moral, so far as he is a good artist, or the philosopher moral, so far as he is a good philosopher? Are their art or science, and their virtue, one thing from one and the same point of view, or two different things, or one thing from two points of view?

These are not easy questions to answer, and we cannot discuss them yet. We have taken the reader now so far as he need go before proceeding to the following essays. What remains is to point out the most general expression for the end in itself, the ultimate practical "why"; and that we find in the word self-realization. But what follows is an anticipation of the sequel, which we cannot promise to make intelligible as yet; and the reader who finds difficulties had better go at once to Essay III.[1]

How can it be proved that self-realization is the end? There is only one way to do that. This is to know what we mean, when we say "self," and "real," and "realize," and "end"; and to know that is to have something like a system of metaphysic, and to say it would be to exhibit that system. Instead of remarking, then, that we lack space to develop our views, let us frankly confess that, properly speaking, we have no such views to develop, and therefore we cannot *prove* our thesis. All that we can do is partially to explain it, and try to render it plausible. It is a formula, which our succeeding Essays will in some way

[1] Bradley's *Ethical Studies*, III.

fill up, and which here we shall attempt to recommend to the reader beforehand.

An objection will occur at once. "There surely are ends," it will be said, "which are not myself, which fall outside my activity, and which, nevertheless, I do realize, and think I ought to realize." We must try to show that the objection rests upon a misunderstanding; and, as a statement of fact, brings with it insuperable difficulties.

Let us first go to the moral consciousness, and see what that tells us about its end.

Morality implies an end in itself: we take that for granted. Something is to be done, a good is to be realized. But that result is, by itself, not morality: morality differs from art, in that it cannot make the act a *mere* means to the result. Yet there is a means. There is not only something to be done, but something to be done by me — *I* must do the act, must realize the end. Morality implies both the something to be done, and the doing of it by me; and if you consider them as end and means, you cannot separate the end and the means. If you chose to change the position of end and means, and say my doing is the end, and the "to be done" is the means, you would not violate the moral consciousness; for the truth is that means and end are not applicable here. The act for me means my act, and there is no end beyond the act. This we see in the belief that failure may be equivalent morally to success — in the saying, that there is nothing good except a good will. In short, for morality the end implies the act, and the act implies self-realization. This, if it were doubtful, would be shown (we may remark in passing) by the feeling of pleasure which attends the putting forth of the act. For if pleasure be the feeling of self, and accompany the act, this indicates that the putting forth of the act is also the putting forth of the self.

But we must not lay too much stress on the moral consciousness, for we shall be reminded, perhaps, that not only can it be, but, like the miser's consciousness, it frequently has been explained; and that both states of mind are illusions generated on one and the same principle.

Let us then dismiss the moral consciousness, and not trouble

ourselves about what we think we ought to do; let us try to show that what we do do, is, perfectly or imperfectly, to realize ourselves, and that we cannot possibly do anything else; that all we can realize is (accident apart) our ends, or the objects we desire; and that all we can desire is, in a word, self.

This, we think, will be readily admitted by our main psychological party. What we wish to avoid is that it should be admitted in a form which makes it unmeaning; and of this there is perhaps some danger. We do not want the reader to say, "Oh, yes, of course, relativity of knowledge, — everything is a state of consciousness," and so dismiss the question. If the reader believes that a steam-engine, after it is made, is nothing but a state of the mind of the person or persons who have made it, or who are looking at it, we do not hold what we feel tempted to call such a silly doctrine; and would point out to those who do hold it that, at all events, the engine is a very different state of mind, after it is made, to what it was before.

Again, we do not want the reader to say, "Certainly, every object or end which I propose to myself is, as such, a mere state of my mind — it is a thought in my head, or a state of me; and so when it becomes real, I become real"; because, though it is very true that my thought, as my thought, cannot exist apart from me thinking it, and therefore my proposed end must, as such, be a state of me; yet this is not what we are driving at. All my ends are my thoughts, but all my thoughts are not my ends; and if what we meant by self-realization was, that I have in my head the idea of any future external event, then I should realize myself practically when I see that the engine is going to run off the line, and it does so.

A desired object (as desired) is a thought, and my thought; but it is something more, and that something more is, in short, that it is desired by me. And we ought by right, before we go further, to exhibit a theory of desire; but, if we could do that, we could not stop to do it. However, we say with confidence that, in desire, what is desired must in all cases be self.

If we could accept the theory that the end or motive is always the idea of a pleasure (or pain) of our own, which is associated

with the object presented, and which is that in the object which moves us, and the only thing which does move us, then from such a view it would follow at once that all we can aim at is a state of ourselves.

We cannot, however, accept the theory, since we believe it both to ignore and to be contrary to facts; but, though we do not admit that the motive is always, or in most cases, the idea of a state of our feeling self, yet we think it is clear that nothing moves unless it be desired, and that what is desired is ourself. For all objects or ends have been associated with our satisfaction, or (more correctly) have been felt in and as ourselves, or we have felt ourselves therein; and the only reason why they move us now is that, when they are presented to our minds as motives, we do now feel ourselves asserted or affirmed in them. The essence of desire for an object would thus be the feeling of our affirmation in the idea of something not ourself, felt against the feeling of ourself as, without the object, void and negated; and it is the tension of this relation which produces motion. If so, then nothing is desired except that which is identified with ourselves, and we can aim at nothing, except so far as we aim at ourselves in it.

But passing by the above, which we cannot here expound and which we lay no stress on, we think that the reader will probably go with us so far as this, that in desire what we want, so far as we want it, is ourselves in some form, or is some state of ourselves, and that our wanting anything else would be psychologically inexplicable.

Let us take this for granted then; but is this what we mean by self-realization? Is the conclusion that, in trying to realize, we try to realize some state of ourself, all that we are driving at? No, the self we try to realize is for us a whole, it is not a mere collection of states.

If we may presuppose in the reader a belief in the doctrine that what is wanted is a state of self, we wish, standing upon that, to urge further that the whole self is present in its states, and that therefore the whole self is the object aimed at; and this is what we mean by self-realization. If a state of self is what is desired, can you, we wish to ask, have states of self, which are states of

nothing; can you possibly succeed in regarding the self as a collection, or stream, or train, or series, or aggregate? If you cannot think of it as a mere one, can you on the other hand think of it as a mere many, as mere ones; or are you not driven, whether you wish it or not, to regard it as a one in many, or a many in one? Are we not forced to look on the self as a whole, which is not merely the sum of its parts, not yet some other particular beside them? And must we not say that to realize self is always to realize a whole, and that the question in morals is to find the true whole, realizing which will practically realize the true self?

This is the question which to the end of this volume we shall find ourselves engaged on. For the present, turning our attention away from it in this form, and contenting ourselves with the proposition that to realize is to realize self, let us now, apart from questions of psychology or metaphysics, see what ends they are, in fact, which living men do propose to themselves, and whether these do not take the form of a whole.

Upon this point there is no need, I think, to dwell at any length; for it seems clear that, if we ask ourselves what it is we should most wish for, we find some general wish which would include and imply our particular wishes. And, if we turn to life, we see that no man has disconnected particular ends; he looks beyond the moment, beyond this or that circumstance or position; his ends are subordinated to wider ends; each situation is seen (consciously or unconsciously) as part of a broader situation, and in this or that act he is aiming at and realizing some larger whole, which is not real in any particular act as such, and yet is realized in the body of acts which carry it out. We need not stop here, because the existence of larger ends, which embrace smaller ends, cannot be doubted; and so far we may say that the self we realize is identified with wholes, or that the ideas of the states of self we realize are associated with ideas that stand for wholes.

But is it also true that these larger wholes are included in one whole? I think that it is. I am not forgetting that we act, as a rule, not *from* principle or with the principle before us, and I wish the reader not to forget that the principle may be there and may be our basis or our goal, without our knowing anything about it.

And here, of course, I am not saying that it has occurred to every one to ask himself whether he aims at a whole, and what that is; because considerable reflection is required for this and the amount need not have been reached. Nor again am I saying that every man's actions are consistent, that he does not wander from his end, and that he has not particular ends which will not come under his main end. Nor further do I assert that the life of every man does form a whole; that in some men there are not co-ordinated ends, which are incompatible and incapable of subordination into a system. What I am saying is, that if the life of the normal man be inspected, and the ends he has in view (as exhibited in his acts) be considered, they will, roughly speaking, be embraced in one main end or whole of ends. It has been said that "every man has a different notion of happiness," but this is scarcely correct, unless mere detail be referred to. Certainly, however, every man has *a* notion of happiness, and *his* notion, though he may not quite know what it is. Most men have a life which they live, and with which they are tolerably satisfied, and that life, when examined, is seen to be fairly systematic; it is seen to be a sphere including spheres, the lower spheres subordinating to themselves and qualifying particular actions, and themselves subordinated to and qualified by the whole. And most men have more or less of an ideal of life — a notion of perfect happiness, which is never quite attained in real life; and if you take (not of course any one, but) the normal decent and serious man, when he has been long enough in the world to know what he wants, you will find that his notion of perfect happiness, or ideal life, is not something straggling, as it were, and discontinuous, but is brought before the mind as an unity; and, if imagined more in detail, is a system where particulars subserve one whole.

Without further dwelling on this, I will ask the reader to reflect whether the ends, proposed to themselves by ordinary persons, are not wholes, and are not in the end members in a larger whole; and, if that be so, whether, since it is so, and since all we can want must (as before stated) be ourselves, we must not now say that we aim not only at the realization of self, but of self as a whole; seeing that there is a general object of desire with

which self is identified, or (on another view) with the idea of which the idea of our pleasure is associated.

Up to the present we have been trying to point out that what we aim at is self, and self as a whole; in other words, that self as a whole is, in the end, the content of our wills. It will still further, perhaps, tend to clear the matter, if we refer to the form of the will — not, of course, suggesting that the form is anything real apart from the content.

On this head we are obliged to restrict ourselves to the assertion of what we believe to be fact. We remarked in our last Essay that, in saying "I will this or that," we really mean something. In saying it we do not mean (at least, not as a rule) to distinguish a self that wills from a self that does not will; but what we do mean is to distinguish the self, as will in general, from this or that object of desire; and, at the same time, to identify the two; to say, this or that is willed, or the will has uttered itself in this or that. The will is looked on as a whole, and there are two sides or factors to that whole. Let us consider an act of will, and, that we may see more clearly, let us take a deliberate volitional choice. We have conflicting desires, say A and B; we feel two tensions, two drawings (so to speak), but we cannot actually affirm ourselves in both. Action does not follow, and we reflect on the two objects of desire, and we are aware that we are reflecting on them, or (if our language allowed us to say it) over them. But we do not merely stand looking on till, so to speak, we find we are gone in one direction, have closed with A or B. For we are aware besides of ourselves, not simply as something theoretically above A and B, but as something also practically above them, as a concentration which is not one or the other, but which is the possibility of either, which is the inner side indifferently of an act which should realize A, or one which should realize B; and hence, which is neither, and yet is superior to both. In short, we do not simply feel ourselves in A and B, but have distinguished ourselves from both, as what is above both. This is one factor in volition, and it is hard to find any name better for it than that of the universal factor, or side, or moment. We need say much less about the second factor. In order to will, we must will something; the uni-

versal side by itself is not will at all. To will we must identify ourselves with this, that, or the other; and here we have the particular side, and the second factor in volition. Thirdly, the volition as a whole (and first, as a whole, is it volition) is the identity of both these factors, and the projection or carrying of it out into external existence; the realization both of the particular side, the this or that to be done, and the realization of the inner side of self in the doing of it, with a realization of self in both, as is proclaimed by the feeling of pleasure. This unity of the two factors we may call the individual whole, or again the concrete universal; and, although we are seldom conscious of the distinct factors, yet every act of will will be seen, when analyzed, to be a whole of this kind, and so to realize what is always the nature of the will.

But to what end have we made this statement? Our object has been to draw the attention of the reader to the fact that not only what is willed by men, the end they set before themselves, is a whole, but also that the will itself, looked at apart from any particular object or content, is a similar whole: or, to put it in its proper order, the self is realized in a whole of ends because it is a whole, and because it is not satisfied till it has found itself, till content be adequate to form, and that content be realized; and this is what we mean by practical self-realization.

"Realize yourself," "realize yourself as a whole," is the result of the foregoing. The reader, I fear, may be wearied already by these prefatory remarks, but it will be better in the end if we delay yet longer. All we know at present is that we are to realize self as *a* whole; but as to *what* whole it is, we know nothing, and must further consider.

The end we desire (to repeat it) is the finding and possessing ourselves as a whole. We aim at this both in theory and practice. What we want in theory is to understand the object; we want neither to remove nor alter the world of sensuous fact, but we want to get at the truth of it. The whole of science takes it for granted that the "not-ourself" is really intelligible; it stands and falls with this assumption. So long as our theory strikes on the mind as strange and alien, so long do we say we have not found truth; we feel the impulse to go beyond and beyond, we alter

and alter our views, till we see them as a consistent whole. There we rest, because then we have found the nature of our own mind and the truth of facts in one. And in practice again, with a difference, we have the same want. Here our aim is not, leaving the given as it is, to find the truth of it; but here we want to force the sensuous fact to correspond to the truth of ourselves. We say, "My sensuous existence is thus, but I truly am not thus; I am different." On the one hand, as a matter of fact, I and my existing world are discrepant; on the other hand, the instinct of my nature tells me that the world is mine. On that impulse I act, I alter and alter the sensuous facts, till I find in them nothing but myself carried out. Then I possess my world, and I do not possess it until I find my will in it; and I do not find that, until what I have is a harmony or a whole in system.

Both in theory and practice my end is to realize myself as a whole. But is this all? Is a *consistent* view all that we want in theory? Is a *harmonious* life all that we want in practice? Certainly not. A doctrine must not only hold together, but it must hold the facts together as well. We cannot rest in it simply because it does not contradict itself. The theory must take in the facts, and an ultimate theory must take in all the facts. So again in practice. It is no human ideal to lead "the life of an oyster." We have no right first to find out just what we happen to be and to have, and then to contract our wants to that limit. We cannot do it if we would, and morality calls to us that, if we try to do it, we are false to ourselves. Against the sensuous facts around us and within us, we must forever attempt to widen our empire; we must at least try to go forward, or we shall certainly be driven back.

So self-realization means more than the mere assertion of the self as a whole. And here we may refer to two principles, which Kant put forward under the names of "Homogeneity" and "Specification." Not troubling ourselves with our relation to Kant, we may say that the ideal is neither to be perfectly homogeneous, nor simply to be specified to the last degree, but rather to combine both these elements. Our true being is not the extreme of unity, nor of diversity, but the perfect identity of both. And

"Realize yourself" does not mean merely "Be a whole," but "Be an *infinite* whole."

At this word, I am afraid, the reader who has not yet despaired of us will come to a stop, and refuse to enter into the region of nonsense. But why should it be nonsense? When the poet and the preacher tell us the mind is infinite, most of us feel that it is so; and has our science really come to this, that the beliefs which answer to our highest feelings must be theoretical absurdities? Should not the philosophy, which tells us such a thing, be very sure of the ground it goes upon? But if the reader will follow me, I think I can show him that the mere finitude of the mind is a more difficult thesis to support than its infinity.

It would be well if I could ask the reader to tell me what he means by "finite." As that cannot be, I must say that finite is limited or ended. To be finite is to be some one among others, some one which is *not* others. One finite ends where the other finite begins; it is bounded from the outside, and cannot go beyond itself without becoming something else, and thereby perishing.

"The mind," we are told, "is finite; and the reason why we say it is finite is that we know it is finite. The mind knows that itself is finite." This is the doctrine we have to oppose.

We answer, The mind is *not* finite, just because it knows it *is* finite. "The knowledge of the limit suppresses the limit." It is a flagrant self-contradiction that the finite should know its own finitude; and it is not hard to make this plain.

Finite means limited from the outside and by the outside. The finite is to know itself as this, or not as finite. If its knowledge ceases to fall wholly within itself, then so far it is not finite. It knows that it is limited from the outside and by the outside, and that means it knows the outside. But if so, then it is so far not finite. If its whole being fell within itself, then, in knowing itself, it could not know that there was anything outside itself. It does do the latter; hence the former supposition is false.

Imagine a man shut up in a room, who said to us, "My faculties are entirely confined to the *inside* of this room. The limit of the room is the limit of my mind, and so I can have no knowledge

whatever of the outside"; should we not answer, "My dear sir, you contradict yourself. If it were as you say, you could not know of an outside, and so, by consequence, not of an inside, as such. You should be in earnest and go through with your doctrine of 'relativity.'"

To the above simple argument I fear we may not have done justice. However that be, I know of no answer to it; and until we find one, we must say that it is not true that the mind is finite.

If I am to realize myself, it must be as infinite; and now the question is, What does infinite mean? and it will be better to say first what it does not mean. There are two wrong views on the subject, which we will take one at a time.

(1) Infinite is not-finite, and that means "end-less." What does endless mean? Not the mere negation of end, because a mere negation is nothing at all, and infinite would thus = 0. The endless is something positive; it means a positive quantity which has no end. Any given number of units is finite; but a series of units, which is produced indefinitely, is infinite. This is the sense of infinite which is in most common use, and which, we shall see, is what Hedonism believes in. It is, however, clear that this infinite is a perpetual self-contradiction, and, so far as it is real, is only finite. Any real quantity has ends, beyond which it does not go. "Increase the quantity" merely says, "Put the end further off"; but in saying that, it does say, "Put the end." "Increase the quantity forever" means, "Have forever a finite quantity, and forever say that it is not finite." In other words, "Remove the end" does imply, by that very removal and the production of the series, the making of a fresh end; so that we still have a finite quantity. Here, so far as the infinite exists, it is finite; so far as it is told to exist, it is told again to be nothing but finite.

(2) Or, secondly, the infinite is *not* the finite, no longer in the sense of being more in quantity, but in the sense of being something else, which is different in quality. The infinite is not in the world of limited things; it exists in a sphere of its own. The mind (*e. g.*) is something *beside* the aggregate of its states. God is something beside the things of this world. This is the infinite believed in by abstract Duty. But here once more, against its will,

infinite comes to mean merely finite. The infinite is a something over against, beside, and outside the finite; and hence is itself also finite, because limited by something else.

In neither of these two senses is the mind infinite. What then is the true sense of infinite? As before, it is the negation of the finite; it is not-finite. But, unlike both the false infinites, it does not leave the finite as it is. It neither, with (1), says "the finite *is to be* not-finite, nor, with (2), tries to get rid of it by doubling it. It does really negate the finite, so that the finite disappears, not by having a negative set over against it, but by being taken up into a higher unity, in which becoming an element, it ceases to have its original character, and is both suppressed and preserved. The infinite is thus "the unity of the finite and infinite." The finite was determined from the outside, so that everywhere to characterize and distinguish it was in fact to divide it. Wherever you defined anything you were at once carried beyond to something else and something else, and this because the negative, required for distinction, was an outside other. In the infinite you can distinguish without dividing; for this is an unity holding within itself subordinated factors which are negative of, and so distinguishable from, each other; while at the same time the whole is so present in each, that each has its own being in its opposite, and depends on that relation for its own life. The negative is also its affirmation. Thus the infinite has a distinction, and so a negation, in itself, but is distinct from and negated by nothing but itself. Far from being one something which is *not* another something, it is a whole in which both one and the other are mere elements. This whole is hence "relative" utterly and through and through, but the relation does not fall outside it; the relatives are moments in which it is the relation of itself to itself, and so is above the relation, and is absolute reality. The finite is relative to something *else;* the infinite is *self*-related. It is this sort of infinite which the mind is. The simplest symbol of it is the circle, the line which returns into itself, not the straight line produced indefinitely; and the readiest way to find it is to consider the satisfaction of desire. There we have myself and its opposite, and the return from the opposite, the finding in the

other nothing but self. And here it would be well to recall what we said above on the form of the will.

If the reader, to whom this account of the infinite is new, has found it in any way intelligible, I think he will see that there is some sense in it, when we say, "Realize yourself as an infinite whole"; or, in other words, "Be specified in yourself, but not specified by anything foreign to yourself."

But the objection comes, "Morality tells us to progress; it tells us we are not concluded in ourselves nor perfect, but that there exists a not-ourself, which never does wholly become ourself. And, apart from morality, it is obvious that I and you, this man and the other man, are finite beings. We are not one another; more or less we must limit each other's sphere; I am what I am more or less by external relations, and I do not fall wholly within myself. Thus I am to be infinite, to have no limit from the outside; and yet I am one among others, and therefore am finite. It is all very well to tell me that in me there is infinity, the perfect identity of subject and object: that I may be willing perhaps to believe, but none the less than I am finite."

We admit the full force of the objection. I *am* finite; I am both infinite *and* finite, and that is why my moral life is a perpetual progress. I must progress, because I have an other which is to be, and yet never quite is, myself; and so, as I am, am in a state of contradiction.

It is not that I wish to increase the mere quantity of my true self. It is that I wish to be nothing *but* my true self, to be rid of all external relations, to bring them all within me, and so to fall wholly within myself.

I am to be perfectly homogeneous; but that I cannot be unless fully specified, and the question is, How can I be extended so as to take in my external relations? Goethe [1] has said, "Be a whole *or* join a whole," but to that we must answer, "You cannot be a whole, *unless* you join a whole."

The difficulty is, being limited and so not a whole, how extend

[1] Immer strebe zum Ganzen, und kannst du selber kein Ganzes
Werden, als dienendes Glied schliess' an ein Ganzes dich an.
Vier Jahreszeiten, 45.

myself so as to be a whole? The answer is, be a member in a whole. Here your private self, your finitude, ceases as such to exist; it becomes the function of an organism. You must be, not a mere piece of, but a member in a whole; and as this must know and will yourself.

The whole, to which you belong, specifies itself in the detail of its functions, and yet remains homogeneous. It lives not many lives but one life, and yet cannot live except in its many members. Just so, each one of the members is alive, but not apart from the whole which lives in it. The organism is homogeneous because it is specified, and specified because it is homogeneous.

"But," it will be said, "what is that to me? I remain one member, and I am not other members. The more perfect the organism, the more is it specified, and so much the intenser becomes its homogeneity. But its 'more' means my 'less.' The unity falls in the whole, and so outside me; and the greater specification of the whole means the making me more special, more narrowed, and limited, and less developed within myself."

We answer that this leaves out of sight a fact quite palpable and of enormous significance, viz., that in the moral organism the members are aware of themselves, and aware of themselves as members. I do not know myself as mere this, against something else which is not myself. The relations of the others to me are not mere external relations. I know myself as a member; that means I am aware of my own function; but it means also that I am aware of the whole as specifying itself in me. The will of the whole knowingly wills itself in me; the will of the whole is the will of the members, and so, in willing my own function, I do know that the others will themselves in me. I do know again that I will myself in the others, and in them find my will once more as not mine, and yet as mine. It is false that the homogeneity falls outside me; it is not only in me, but for me too; and apart from my life in it, my knowledge of it, and devotion to it, I am not myself. When it goes out my heart goes out with it, where it triumphs I rejoice, where it is maimed I suffer; separate me from the love of it, and I perish.

No doubt the distinction of separate selves remains, but the

point is this. In morality the existence of my mere private self, as such, is something which ought not to be, and which, so far as I am moral, has already ceased. I am morally realized, not until my personal self has utterly ceased to be my exclusive self, is no more a will which is outside others' wills, but finds in the world of others nothing but self.

"Realize yourself as an infinite whole" means "Realize yourself as the self-conscious member of an infinite whole, by realizing that whole in yourself." When that whole is truly infinite, and when your personal will is wholly made one with it, then you also have reached the extreme of homogeneity and specification in one, and have attained a perfect self-realization.

The foregoing will, we hope, become clear to the reader of this volume. He must consider what has been said so far as the text, which the sequel is to illustrate and work out in detail. Meanwhile, our aim has been to put forward the formula of self-realization, and in some measure to explain it. The following Essays will furnish, we hope, something like a commentary and justification. We shall see that the self to be realized is not the self as a collection of particulars, is not the universal as all the states of a certain feeling; and that it is not again an abstract universal, as the form of duty; that neither are in harmony with life, with the moral consciousness, or with themselves; that when the self is identified with, and wills, and realizes a concrete universal, a real totality, then first does it find itself, is satisfied, self-determined, and free, "the free will that wills itself as the free will."

Let us resume, then, the results of the present Essay. We have attempted to show (1) That the formula of "what for?" must be rejected by every ethical doctrine as not universally valid; and that hence no one theory can gain the smallest advantage (except over the foolish) by putting it forward. That now for us (as it was for Hellas) the main question is, There being some end, what is that end? And (2), with which second part, if it fall, the first need not fall, we have endeavoured briefly to point out that the final end, with which morality is identified, or under which it is included, can be expressed not otherwise than by self-realization.

[1] Bradley's *Ethical Studies*.

THOMAS HILL GREEN

(1836–1882)

PROLEGOMENA TO ETHICS*

Book III.—THE MORAL IDEAL AND MORAL PROGRESS

CHAPTER II. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MORAL IDEAL

A. The Personal Character of the Moral Ideal

Let us pause here to take stock of the conclusions so far arrived at. It will be convenient to state them in dogmatic form, begging the reader to understand that this form is adopted to save time, and does not betoken undue assurance on the part of the writer. Through certain *media*, and under certain consequent limitations, but with the constant characteristic of self-consciousness and self-objectification, the one divine mind gradually reproduces itself in the human soul. In virtue of this principle in him man has definite capabilities, the realisation of which, since in it alone he can satisfy himself, forms his true good. They are not realised, however, in any life that can be observed, in any life that has been, or is, or (as it would seem) that can be lived by man as we know him; and for this reason we cannot say with any adequacy what the capabilities are. Yet, because the essence of man's spiritual endowment is the consciousness of having it, the idea of his having such capabilities, and of a possible better state of himself consisting in their further realisation, is a moving influence in him. It has been the parent of the institutions and usages, of the social judgments and aspirations, through which human life has been so far bettered; through which man has so far realised his capabilities and marked out the path that he must follow in their further realisation. As his true good is or would be their complete realisation, so his good

* Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1883; 4th ed., *ib.* 1899.

ness is proportionate to his habitual responsiveness to the idea of there being such a true good, in the various forms of recognised duty and beneficent work in which that idea has so far taken shape among men. In other words, it consists in the direction of the will to objects determined for it by this idea, as operative in the person willing; which direction of the will we may, upon the ground stated, fitly call its determination by reason.

Our next step should be to explain further how it is that the idea in man of a possible better state of himself, consisting in a further realisation of his capabilities, has been the moralising agent in human life; how it has yielded our moral standards, loyalty to which — itself the product of the same idea — is the condition of goodness in the individual. Before we attempt this explanation, however, it will be well to clear up an ambiguity which will probably be thought to lurk in the doctrine already advanced. We have spoken of a certain "divine principle" as the ground of human will and reason; as realising itself in man; as having capabilities of which the full development would constitute the perfection of human life; of direction to objects contributory to this perfection as characteristic of a good will. But what, it will be asked, is to be understood in regard to the relation of this "divine principle" to the will and reason of individuals? Does it realise itself in persons, in you and me, or in some impersonal Humanity? Do the capabilities spoken of admit of fulfilment in individuals, or is the perfection of human life some organisation of society in which the individual is a perfectly adjusted means to an end which he is not in himself? Until these questions have been dealt with, a suspicion may fairly be entertained that we have been playing fast and loose with the conception of man as in himself an end to himself. We have been taking advantage, it may be said, of a speculation in regard to the development of the human race, which is quite a different thing from what is naturally understood by a moral progress of the individual, to justify a theory which that speculation, fairly interpreted, tends rather to invalidate. The theory we want to maintain is one that would found a supposed duty, and a supposed possible effort, on the part of the individual to make him-

self better, upon an ideal in him of a possible moral perfection, upon a conception actuating him of something that he may possibly become as an absolute end in himself. Does not the belief in a development of the human race, which individuals indeed unwittingly promote but perish in promoting, logically involve the complete negation of such a theory?

It is clearly of the very essence of the doctrine above advanced that the divine principle, which we suppose to be realising itself in man, should be supposed to realise itself in persons, as such. But for reflection on our personality, on our consciousness of ourselves as objects to ourselves, we could never dream of there being such a self-realising principle at all, whether as implied in the world or in ourselves. It is only because we are consciously objects to ourselves, that we can conceive a world as an object to a single mind, and thus as a connected whole. It is the irreducibility of this self-objectifying consciousness to anything else, the impossibility of accounting for it as an effect, that compels us to regard it as the presence in us of the mind for which the world exists. To admit, therefore, that the self-realisation of the divine principle can take place otherwise than in a consciousness which is an object to itself, would be in contradiction of the very ground upon which we believe that a divine principle does so realise itself in man. Personality, no doubt, is a term that has often been fought over without any very precise meaning being attached to it. If we mean anything else by it than the quality in a subject of being consciously an object to itself, we are not justified in saying that it necessarily belongs to God and to any being in whom God in any measure reproduces or realises himself. But whatever we mean by personality, and whatever difficulties may attach to the notion that a divine principle realises itself through a qualifying medium in the persons of men, it is certain that we shall only fall in contradictions by substituting for persons, as the subject in which the divine self-realisation takes place, any entity to which self-consciousness cannot intelligibly be ascribed. If it is impossible that the divine self-realisation should be complete in such persons as we are or can conceive ourselves coming to be, on the other hand in the absence of self-

objectification, which is at least the essential thing in personality, it cannot even be inchoate.

This consideration has an important bearing upon certain ways of thinking or speaking in which we are apt to take refuge when, having adopted a theory of the moral life as the fulfilment in the human spirit of some divine idea, we are called upon to face the difficulty of stating whether and how the fulfilment is really achieved. Any life which the individual can possibly live is at best so limited by the necessities of his position, that it seems impossible, on supposition that a divine self-realising principle is at work in it, that it should be an adequate expression of such a principle. Granted the most entire devotion of a man to the attainment of objects contributory to human perfection, the very condition of his effectually promoting that end is that the objects in which he is actually interested, and upon which he really exercises himself, should be of limited range. The idea, unexpressed and inexpressible, of some absolute and all-embracing end is, no doubt, the source of such devotion, but it can only take effect in the fulfilment of some particular function in which it finds but restricted utterance. It is in fact only so far as we are members of a society, of which we can conceive the common good as our own, that the idea has any practical hold on us at all, and this very membership implies confinement in our individual realisation of the idea. Each has primarily to fulfil the duties of his station. His capacity for action beyond the range of those duties is definitely bounded, and with it is definitely bounded also his sphere of personal interests, his character, his *realised* possibility. No one so confined, it would seem, can exhibit all that the Spirit, working through and in him, properly and potentially is. Yet is not such confinement the condition of the only personality that we know? It is the condition of social life, and social life is to personality what language is to thought. Language presupposes thought as a capacity, but in us the capacity of thought is only actualised in language. So human society presupposes persons in capacity — subjects capable each of conceiving himself and the bettering of his life as an end to himself — but it is only in the intercourse of men, each

recognised by each as an end, not merely a means, and thus as having reciprocal claims, that the capacity is actualised and that we really live as persons. If society then (as thus appears) is the condition of all development of our personality, and if the necessities of social life, as alone we know or can conceive it, put limits to our personal development, can we suppose it to be in persons that the spirit operative in men finds its full expression and realisation?

It is from this difficulty that we are apt to seek an escape by speaking as if the human spirit fulfilled its idea in the history or development of mankind, as distinct from the persons whose experiences constitute that history, or who are developed in that development; whether in the achievements of great nations at special epochs of their history, or in some progress towards a perfect organisation of society, of which the windings and back-currents are too complex for it to be surveyed by us as a whole. But that we are only disguising the difficulty, not escaping it, by this manner of speech, we shall see upon reflecting that there can be nothing in a nation however exalted its mission, or in a society however perfectly organised, which is not in the persons composing the nation or the society. Our ultimate standard of worth is an ideal of *personal* worth. All other values are relative to value for, of, or in a person. To speak of any progress or improvement or development of a nation or society or mankind, except as relative to some greater worth of persons, is to use words without meaning. The saying that "a nation is merely an aggregate of individuals" is indeed fallacious, but mainly on account of the introduction of the emphatic "merely." The fallacy lies in the implication that the individuals could be what they are, could have their moral and spiritual qualities, independently of their existence in a nation. The notion is conveyed that they bring those qualities with them ready-made into the national existence, which thereupon results from their combination; while the truth is that, whatever moral capacity must be presupposed, it is only actualised through the habits, institutions, and laws, in virtue of which the individuals form a nation. But it is none the less true that the life of the nation has no real existence

except as the life of the individuals composing the nation, a life determined by their intercourse with each other, and deriving its peculiar features from the conditions of that intercourse.

Nor, unless we allow ourselves to play fast and loose with the terms "spirit" and "will," can we suppose a national spirit and will to exist except as the spirit and will of individuals, affected in a certain way by intercourse with each other and by the history of the nation. Since it is only through its existence as our self-consciousness that we know anything of spirit at all, to hold that a spirit can exist except as a self-conscious subject is self-contradictory. A "national spirit" is not something in the air; nor is it a series of phenomena of a particular kind; nor yet is it God — the eternal Spirit or self-conscious subject which communicates itself, in measure and under conditions, to beings which through that communication become spiritual. It would seem that it could only mean one of two things; either (*a*) some type of personal character, as at any time exhibited by individuals who are held together and personally modified by national ties and interests which they recognise as such; or (*b*) such a type of personal character as we may suppose *should* result, according to the divine idea of the world, from the intercourse of individuals with each other under the influence of the common institutions which make a particular nation, whether that type of character is actually attained or no. At any rate, if a "national spirit" is held to be a form in which an eternal Spirit, in the only sense in which we have reason to think there is such a thing, realises itself, then it can only have its being in persons, though in persons, of course, specially modified by the special conditions of their intercourse with each other. The degree of perfection, of realisation of their possibilities, attained by these persons is the measure of the fulfilment which the idea of the human spirit attains in the particular national spirit. If the fulfilment of the idea is necessarily incomplete in them, it can be no more complete in the national spirit, which has no other existence, as national, than that which it has in them.

A like criticism must apply to any supposition that the spirit which is in man could fulfil its capability — the capability which

belongs to it as a self-realisation of the eternal mind through the medium of an animal soul — in some history of mankind or some organisation of society, except in respect of a state of personal being attained by the individuals who are subjects of the history or members of the society. It does not appear how any idea should express or realise itself in an endless series of events, unless the series is relative to something beyond itself, which abides while it passes; and such a mere endless series the history of mankind must be, except so far as its results are gathered into the formation of the character of abiding persons. At any rate, the idea of a spirit cannot realise itself except in spirits. The human spirit cannot develop itself according to its idea except in self-conscious subjects, whose possession of the qualities — all implying self-consciousness — that are proper to such a spirit, in measures gradually approximating to the realisation of the idea, forms its development. The spiritual progress of mankind is thus an unmeaning phrase, unless it means a progress *of* personal character and *to* personal character — a progress of which feeling, thinking, and willing subjects are the agents and sustainers, and of which each step is a fuller realisation of the capacities of such subjects. It is simply unintelligible unless understood to be in the direction of more perfect forms of personal life.

There may be reason to hold that there are capacities of the human spirit not realisable in persons under the conditions of any society that we know, or can positively conceive, or that may be capable of existing on the earth. Such a belief may be warranted by the consideration on the one hand of the promise which the spirit gives of itself, both in its actual occasional achievement and in the aspirations of which we are individually conscious, on the other hand of the limitations which the necessity of confinement to a particular social function seems to impose on individual attainment. We may in consequence justify the supposition that the personal life, which historically or on earth is lived under conditions which thwart its development, is continued in a society, with which we have no means of communication through the senses, but which shares in and carries fur-

ther every measure of perfection attained by men under the conditions of life that we know. Or we may content ourselves with saying that the personal self-conscious being, which comes from God, is forever continued in God. Or we may pronounce the problem suggested by the constant spectacle of unfulfilled human promise to be simply insoluble. But meanwhile the negative assurance at any rate must remain, that a capacity, which is nothing except as personal, cannot be realised in any impersonal modes of being.

It is not, of course, to be denied that the facts of human life and history put abundant difficulties in the way of any theory whatever of human development, as from the less to the more perfect kind of life, in distinction from mere generalisations as to the nature of the changes which society has undergone. If it were not for certain demands of the spirit which is ourself, the notion of human progress could never occur to us. But these demands, having a common ground with the apprehension of facts, are not to be suppressed by it. They are an expression of the same principle of self-objectification without which, as we have seen, there could be no such thing as facts for us, for our consciousness, at all. Their strength is illustrated by the persistency with which, in spite of the rebuff they forever seem to be receiving from observations of nature and history, they forever reassert themselves. It is the consciousness of possibilities in ourselves, unrealised but constantly in process of realisation, that alone enables us to read the idea of development into what we observe of natural life, and to conceive that there must be such a thing as a plan of the world. That we can adjust all that we observe to this idea is plainly not the case. When we have traced processes of development in particular regions of organic life, we are scarcely nearer the goal. For, in order to satisfy the idea which sets us upon the search for development, we should be able to connect all particular processes of development with each other, the lower as subservient to the higher, and to view the world, including human history, as a whole throughout which there is a concerted fulfilment of capabilities. This we cannot do; but neither our inability to do it, nor the appear-

ance of positive inconsistency between much that we observe and any scheme of universal development, can weaken the authority of the idea, which does not rest on the evidence of observation, but expresses an inward *demand for the recognition of a unity in the world answering to the unity of ourselves*—a demand involved in that self-consciousness which, as we have seen, alone enables us to observe facts as such. The important thing is that we should not, in eagerness to reconcile the idea of development with facts known only bit by bit and not in their real integrity, lose sight of the essential implications of the idea itself.

Of these implications one is the eternal realisation for, or in, the eternal mind of the capacities gradually realised in time. Another is that the end of the process of development should be a real fulfilment of the capacities presupposed by the process. When we speak of any subject as in process of development according to some law, we must mean, if we so speak advisedly, that that into which the subject is being developed already exists for some consciousness. We express the same thing by saying that the subject is something, in itself or potentially, which it has not yet in time actually become; and this again implies that in relation to some conscious being it is eternally that which in some other relation it is in time coming to be. A state of life or consciousness not yet attained by a subject capable of it, *in relation to that subject* we say *actually is not;* but if there were no consciousness for which it existed, there would be no sense in saying that *in possibility it is,* for it would simply be nothing at all. Thus, when we speak of the human spirit being in itself, or in possibility, something which is not yet realised in human experience, we mean that there is a consciousness for and in which this something really exists, though, on the other hand, for the consciousness which constitutes human experience it exists only in possibility.

It would not be enough to say "a consciousness *for* which it really exists." That might merely mean that this undeveloped capability of the human spirit existed as an object of consciousness to the eternal mind, in the same way in which facts that I contemplate exist for me. Such a statement would suffice, were

the subject of development merely a natural organism. But when that which is being developed is itself a self-conscious subject, the end of its becoming must really exist not merely *for*, but *in* or *as*, a self-conscious subject. There must be eternally such a subject which is all that the self-conscious subject, as developed in time, has the possibility of becoming; in which the idea of the human spirit, or all that it has in itself to become, is completely realised. This consideration may suggest the true notion of the spiritual relation in which we stand to God; that He is not merely a Being who has made us, in the sense that we exist as an object of the divine consciousness in the same way in which we must suppose the system of nature so to exist, but that He is a Being in whom we exist; with whom we are in principle one; with whom the human spirit is identical, in the sense that He *is* all which the human spirit is capable of becoming.

In regard to the other principle which we have noticed as implied in the idea of development — that the end of the process of development should be a real fulfilment of the capacities pre-supposed by the process — it may be argued that, however indisputable, it can afford us little guidance in judging of the ultimate end to which any process of development is tending. In cases where end or function are matter of observation, and capacity or faculty are inferred from them, it has no application; and if it is to be available in other cases, we must have some means of ascertaining the nature of capacities, independently of observation of the ends to which they are relative. But have we any such means? And in their absence, since the ultimate end of human progress must be beyond the reach of observation, are not our conclusions as to capacities of men which must be fulfilled in the course of human development mere arbitrary guesswork? May it not turn out that what we have been regarding as permanent capacities of men, from which something might be inferred as to the end of human development, on the ground that this end must be such as really to fulfil them, are temporary phases of some unknown force, working in we know not what direction, and that their end may be simply to disappear, having borne their part in the generation of an unknowable future?

To such questions we should reply as follows: We must be on our guard against lapsing into the notion that a process *ad infinitum*, a process not relative to an end, can be a process of development at all. If the history of mankind were simply a history of events, of which each determines the next following, and so on in endless series, there would be no progress or development in it. As we cannot sum an infinite series, there would be nothing in the history of mankind, so conceived, to satisfy that demand for unity of the manifold in relation to an end, which alone leads us to read the idea of development into the course of human affairs. If there is a progress in the history of men, it must be towards an end consisting in a state of being which is not itself a series in time, but is both comprehended eternally in the eternal mind and is intrinsically, or in itself, eternal. Further: although any other capacity may be of a kind which, having done its work in contributing to the attainment of such a state of being, passes away in the process of its attainment — as the particular capacities of myriads of animals, their function fulfilled, pass away every hour — yet a capacity consisting in a self-conscious personality cannot be supposed so to pass away. It partakes of the nature of the eternal. It is not itself a series in time; for the series of time exists for it. We cannot believe in there being a real fulfilment of such a capacity in an end which should involve its extinction, because the conviction of there being an end in which our capacities are fulfilled is founded on our self-conscious personality — on the idea of an absolute value in a spirit which we ourselves are. And for the same reason we cannot believe that the capacities of men — capacities illustrated to us by the actual institutions of society, though they could not be so illustrated if we had not an independent idea of them — can be really fulfilled in a state of things in which any rational man should be treated merely as a means, and not as in himself an end. On the whole, our conclusion must be that, great as are the difficulties which beset the idea of human development when applied to the facts of life, we do not escape them, but empty the idea of any real meaning, if we suppose the end of the development to be one in the attainment of which persons — agents who

are ends to themselves — are extinguished, or one which is other than a state of self-conscious being, or one in which that reconciliation of the claims of persons, as each at once a means to the good of the other and an end to himself, already partially achieved in the higher forms of human society, is otherwise than completed.

Meanwhile, as must constantly be borne in mind, in saying that the human spirit can only realise itself, that the divine idea of man can only be fulfilled, in and through persons, we are not denying but affirming that the realisation and *fulfilment can only take place in and through society*. Without society, no persons: this is as true as that without persons, without self-objectifying agents, there could be no such society as we know. Such society is founded on the recognition by persons of each other, and their interest in each other, *as persons*, *i. e.* as beings who are ends to themselves, who are consciously determined to action by the conception of themselves, as that for the sake of which they act. They are interested in each other *as persons* in so far as each, being aware that another presents his own self-satisfaction to himself as an object, finds satisfaction for himself in procuring or witnessing the self-satisfaction of the other. Society is founded on such mutual interest, in the sense that unless it were operative, however incapable of expressing itself in abstract formulæ, there would be nothing to lead to that treatment by one human being of another as an end, not merely a means, on which society even in its narrowest and most primitive forms must rest. There would be nothing to countervail the tendency, inherent in the self-asserting and self-seeking subject, to make every object he deals with, even an object of natural affection, a means to his own gratification. The combination of men as ἴσοι καὶ ὅμοιοι for common ends would be impossible. Thus except as between persons, each recognising the other as an end in himself and having the will to treat him as such, there can be no society.

But the converse is equally true, that only through society, in the sense explained, is personality actualised. Only through society is any one enabled to give that effect to the idea of himself as the object of his actions, to the idea of a possible better state

of himself, without which the idea would remain like that of space to a man who had not the senses either of sight or touch. Some practical recognition of personality by another, of an "I" by a "Thou" and a "Thou" by an "I," is necessary to any practical consciousness of it, to any such consciousness of it as can express itself in act. On the origin of such recognition in the past we speculate in vain. To whatever primitive groupings, as a matter of history or of imagination, we can trace our actual society, these must already imply it. But we know that we, who are born under an established system of family ties, and of reciprocal rights and obligations sanctioned by the state, learn to regard ourselves as persons among other persons because we are treated as such. From the dawn of intelligence we are treated, in one way or another, as entitled to have a will of our own, to make ourselves the objects of our actions, on condition of our practically recognising the same title in others. All education goes on the principle that we are, or are to become, persons in this sense. And just as it is through the action of society that the individual comes at once practically to conceive his personality — his nature as an object to himself — and to conceive the same personality as belonging to others, so it is society that supplies all the higher content to this conception, all those objects of a man's personal interest, in living for which he lives for his own satisfaction, except such as are derived from the merely animal nature.

Thus it is equally true that the human spirit can only realise itself, or fulfil its idea, in persons, and that it can only do so through society, since society is the condition of the development of a personality. But the function of society being the development of persons, the realisation of the human spirit in society can only be attained according to the measure in which that function is fulfilled. It does not follow from this that all persons must be developed in the same way. The very existence of mankind presupposes the distinction between the sexes; and as there is a necessary difference between their functions, there must be a corresponding difference between the modes in which the personality of men and women is developed. Again, though we

must avoid following the example of philosophers who have shown an *a priori* necessity for those class-distinctions of their time which after-ages have dispensed with, it would certainly seem as if distinctions of social position and power were necessarily incidental to the development of human personality. There cannot be this development without a recognised power of appropriating material things. This appropriation must vary in its effects according to talent and opportunity, and from that variation again must result differences in the form which personality takes in different men. Nor does it appear how those reciprocal services which elicit the feeling of mutual dependence, and thus promote the recognition by one man of another as an "alter ego," would be possible without different limitations of function and ability, which determine the range within which each man's personality develops, in other words, the scope of his personal interests.

Thus, under any conditions possible, so far as can be seen, for human society, one man who was the best that his position allowed, would be very different from another who was the best that *his* position allowed. But, in order that either may be good at all in the moral sense, *i. e.* intrinsically and not merely as a means — in order that the idea of the human spirit may be in any sense fulfilled in him — the fulfilment of that idea in some form or other, the contribution to human perfection in some way or other, must be the object in which he seeks self-satisfaction, the object for which he lives in living for himself. And it is only so far as this development and direction of personality is obtained for all who are capable of it (as presumably every one who says "I" is capable), that human society, either in its widest comprehension or in any of its particular groups, can be held to fulfil its function, to realise its idea as it is in God.

B. The Formal Character of the Moral Ideal or Law

Having thus endeavoured to explain the relation in which the development of the human race must stand to the personal perfection of individuals, we return to the problem which was post-

poned to make way for that explanation. We have seen how there is a real identity between the end for which the good man consciously lives — the end of fulfilling in some way his rational capacity, or the idea of a best that is in him — and the end to which human development, if there is such a thing, must be eternally relative in the eternal mind. It may be no more than such an identity as there is between the mere consciousness *that* there is an object and the consciousness *what* the object is. More precisely, it may be no more than the identity between the idea that a man has, in virtue of his rational capacity, of something, he knows not what, which he may and should become, and the idea, perfectly articulated and defined in the divine consciousness, of a state of being in which the capacities of all men are fully realised. But the idea as it is in the individual man, however indefinite and unfulfilled, is a communication in germ or principle of the idea as it is in God, and the communication is the medium through which the idea as in God determines the progressive development of human capacities in time. Alike as in God, as communicated in principle to men, and as realising itself by means of that communication in a certain development of human capacities, the idea can have its being only in a personal, *i. e.* a self-objectifying, consciousness. From the mere idea in a man, however, "of something, he knows not what, which he may and should become," to the actual practice which is counted morally good, it may naturally seem a long step. We have therefore to explain in further detail how such an idea, gradually taking form and definiteness, has been the moralising agent in human life, yielding our moral standards and inducing obedience to them.

Supposing such an idea to be operative in man, what must be the manner of its operation? It will keep before him an object, which he presents to himself as absolutely desirable, but which is other than any particular object of desire. Of this object it can never be possible for him to give a sufficient account, because it consists in the realisation of capabilities which can only be fully known in their ultimate realisation. At the same time, because it is the fulfilment of himself, of that which he has in him to be,

it will excite an interest in him like no other interest, different in kind from any of his desires and aversions except such as are derived from it. It will be an interest as in an object conceived to be of unconditional value; one of which the value does not depend on any desire that the individual may at any time feel for it or for anything else, or on any pleasure that, either in its pursuit or in its attainment or as its result, he may experience. The conception of its desirableness will not arise, like the conception of the desirableness of any pleasure, from previous enjoyment of it or from reflection on the desire for it. On the contrary, the desire for the object will be founded on a conception of its desirableness as a fulfilment of the capabilities of which a man is conscious in being conscious of himself.

In such men and at such times as a desire for it does actually arise — a desire in that sense which implies that the man puts himself forth for the realisation of the desired object — it will express itself in their imposition on themselves of rules requiring something to be done irrespectively of any inclination to do it, irrespectively of any desired end to which it is a means, *other than this end, which is desired because conceived as absolutely desirable.* With the men in whom, and at the times when, there is no such desire, the consciousness of there being something absolutely desirable will still be a qualifying element in life. It will yield a recognition of those unconditional rules of conduct to which, from the prevalence of unconformable passions, it fails to produce actual obedience. It will give meaning to the demand, without which there is no morality and in which all morality is virtually involved, that "something be done merely for the sake of its being done," [1] because it is a consciousness of the possibility of an action in which no desire shall be gratified but the desire excited by the idea of the act itself, as of something absolutely desirable in the sense that in it the man does the best that he has in him to do.

But, granted the conception of an unconditional good for man,

[1] So gewiss der Mensch ein Mensch ist, so gewiss äussert sich in ihm eine Zunöthigung, einiges ganz unabhängig von äusseren Zwecken zu thun lediglich damit es geschehe, und andres eben so zu unterlassen lediglich damit es unterbleibe. — J. G. Fichte.

with unconditional rules of conduct which it suggests, what in particular will those rules enjoin? We have said that man can never give sufficient account of what his unconditional good is, because he cannot know what his capabilities are till they are realised. This is the explanation of the infirmity that has always been found to attach to attempted definitions of the moral ideal. They are always open to the charge that there is employed in the definition, openly or disguisedly, the very notion which profession is made of defining. If, on being asked for an account of the unconditional good, we answer either that it is the good will or that to which the good will is directed, we are naturally asked further, what then is the good will? And if in answer to this question we can only say that it is the will for the unconditional good, we are no less naturally charged with "moving in a circle." We do but slightly disguise the circular process without escaping from it if, instead of saying directly that the good will is the will for the unconditional good, we say that it is the will to conform to a universal law for its own sake or because it is conceived as a universal law; for the recognition of the authority of such a universal law must be founded on the conception of its relation to an unconditional good.

It is one of the attractions of Hedonistic Utilitarianism that it seems to avoid this logical embarrassment. If we say that the unconditional good is pleasure, and that the good will is that which in its effects turns out to produce most pleasure on the whole, we are certainly not chargeable with assuming in either definition the idea to be defined. We are not at once explaining the unconditional good by reference to the good will, and the good will by reference to the unconditional good. But we only avoid doing so by taking the good will to be relative to something external to itself; to have its value only as a means to an end wholly alien to, and different from, goodness itself. Upon this view the perfect man would not be an end in himself; a perfect society of men would not be an end in itself. Man or society would alike be only perfect in relation to the production of feelings which are felt, with whatever differences of quantity, by good men and bad, by man and brute, indifferently. By such

a theory we do not avoid the logical embarrassment *attending the definition of a moral ideal;* for it is not a moral ideal, in the sense naturally attached to that phrase, that we are defining at all. By a moral ideal we mean some type of man or character or personal activity, considered as an end in itself. But, according to the theory of Hedonistic Utilitarianism, no such type of man or character or personal activity is an end in itself at all.

It may not follow that the theory is false on this account. That is a point which would have to be considered in a full critical discussion of Hedonism. What has to be noticed here is that such a theory is not available for our purpose. It affords no help when once we have convinced ourselves that man can only be an end to himself; that consequently it is only in himself as he may become, in a complete realisation of what he has it in him to be, in his perfect character, that he can find satisfaction; that in this therefore alone can lie his unconditional good. When we are seeking for a definition of the moral ideal in accordance with this view, we should be aware what we are about. It is as well to confess at once that, when we are giving an account of an agent whose development is governed by an ideal of his own perfection, we cannot avoid speaking of one and the same condition of will alternately as means and as end. The goodness of the will of man as a means must be described as lying in direction to that same goodness as an end. For the end is that full self-conscious realisation of capabilities to which the means lies in the self-conscious exercise of the same capabilities — an exercise of them in imperfect realisation, but under the governing idea of the desirability of their fuller realisation. If we had knowledge of what their fuller realisation would be, we might so describe it as to distinguish it from that exercise of them in less complete development which is the means to that full realisation. We might thus distinguish the perfection of man as end from his goodness as means to the end, though the perfection would be in principle identical with the goodness, differing from it only as the complete from the incomplete. But we have no such knowledge of the full realisation. We know it only according to the measure of what we have so far done or are doing for its attain-

ment. And this is to say that we have no knowledge of the perfection of man as the unconditional good, but that which we have of his goodness or the good will, in the form which it has assumed as a means to, or in the effort after, the unconditional good; a good which is not an object of speculative knowledge to man, but of which the idea — the conviction of there being such a thing — is the influence through which his life is directed to its attainment.

It is therefore not an illogical procedure, because it is the only procedure suited to the matter in hand, to say that the goodness of man lies in devotion to the ideal of humanity, and then that the ideal of humanity consists in the goodness of man. It means that such an ideal, not yet realised but operating as a motive, already constitutes in man an inchoate form of that life, that perfect development of himself, of which the completion would be the realised ideal itself. Now in relation to a nature such as ours, having other impulses than those which draw to the ideal, this ideal becomes, in Kant's language, an imperative, and a categorical imperative. It will command something to be done universally and unconditionally, irrespectively of whether there is in any one, at any time, an inclination to do it. But when we ask ourselves what it is that this imperative commands to be done, we are met with just the same difficulty as when asked to define the moral ideal or the unconditional good. We can only say that the categorical imperative commands us to obey the categorical imperative, and to obey it for its own sake. If — not merely for practical purposes, but as a matter of speculative certainty — we identify its injunction with any particular duty, circumstances will be found upon which the bindingness of that duty is contingent, and the too hasty identification of the categorical imperative with it will issue in a suspicion that, after all, there is no categorical imperative, no absolute duty, at all. After the explanations just given, however, we need not shrink from asserting as the basis of morality an unconditional duty, which yet is not a duty to do anything unconditionally except to fulfil that unconditional duty. It is the duty of realising an ideal which cannot be adequately defined till it is realised, and which, when

realised, would no longer present itself as a source of duties, because the *should be* would be exchanged for the *is*. This is the unconditional ground of those particular duties to do or to forbear doing, which in the effort of the social man to realise his ideal have so far come to be recognised as binding, but which are each in some way or other conditional, because relative to particular circumstances, however wide the range of circumstances may be to which they are relative.

At the same time, then, that the categorical imperative can enjoin nothing *without liability to exception* but disinterested obedience to itself, it will have no lack of definite content. The particular duties which it enjoins will *at least* be all those in the practice of which, according to the hitherto experience of men, some progress is made towards the fulfilment of man's capabilities, or some condition necessary to that progress is satisfied. We say it will enjoin these *at least*, because particular duties must be constantly arising out of it for the individual, for which no formula can be found before they arise, and which are thus extraneous to the recognised code. Every one, however, of the duties which the law of the state or the law of opinion recognises must in some way be relative to circumstances. The rule therefore in which it is conveyed, though stated in the most general terms compatible with real significance, must still admit of exceptions. Yet is there a true sense in which the whole system of such duties is unconditionally binding. It is so as an expression of the absolute imperative to seek the absolutely desirable, the ideal of humanity, the fulfilment of man's vocation. Because an expression (though an incomplete one) of this absolute imperative, because a product of the effort after such an unconditional good, the requirements of conventional morality, however liable they may be to exceptions, arising out of circumstances other than those to which they are properly applicable, are at least liable to no exception for the sake of the individual's pleasure. As against any desire but some form or other of that desire for the best in conduct, which will, no doubt, from time to time suggest new duties in seeming conflict with the old — against any desire for this or that pleasure, or any aversion from this or that pain — they are unconditionally binding.

JAMES MARTINEAU

(1805–1900)

TYPES OF ETHICAL THEORY*

Book I.—IDIOPSYCHOLOGICAL ETHICS

CHAPTER I. FUNDAMENTAL ETHICAL FACT

The broad fact, stated in its unanalysed form, of which we have to find the interpretation, is this: that, distinctively as men, we have an irresistible tendency to *approve and disapprove*, to pass judgments of right and wrong. Wherever approbation falls, there we cannot help recognising *merit:* wherever disapprobation, *demerit.* To the former we are impelled to assign honour and such external good as may express our sympathy, and to feel that no less than this is due: to the latter we award disgrace and such external ill as may mark our antipathy, with the consciousness that we are not only entitled but constrained to this infliction. So *habitual* is this manner of thinking, that the very word in which we sum up its contents, — the word *Morals*, — means *habits*, *customs;* and so does the Greek word *Ethics;* and so the German, *Sitten.* These terms, no doubt, might be accounted for in either of two modes: as expressing simply what has happened to become usage, and merely on that account is valued and insisted on by us; or, as expressing that which, being insisted on by the inner demand of human nature, is exacted from us all and *made into our usage.* Between these opposite orders of interpretation we can have no difficulty in deciding, if we consider: (1) that the *customs* of a race can never be treated as fortuitous data, out of which, as already *there*, the most essential characteristics and affections spring; but must themselves be the outward product and manifestation of the inner life, and give the most accurate determination of its form; and (2) that, as if in protest against any identification of morality with mere *customariness*, the words

* Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1885; 2d rev. ed. 1886; 3d rev. ed. 1891.

which begin together part company at the sight of *customs that are immoral;* and as soon as the evil we condemn ceases to be exceptional, — as soon as we encounter the shock of an *established wickedness*, — we refuse to give it the name consecrated to the prior usages, and condemn it as an offence. Nor is it to our feeling anything less than monstrous to maintain, that what we call falsehood or selfishness could, by any multiplication or perpetuity, change its character, and in becoming *usual*, become also *moral*. It is, therefore, because the sentiments of right and wrong are the *characteristics of human nature*, that the system of action which they call up receives the name of *Mores*, or *established ways*.

Language is the great confessional of the human heart, and betrays, by its abiding record, many a natural feeling which would escape our artificial inspection; and it is better worth interrogating than the mixed product of our spontaneous life and conventional opinion. And the fundamental fact to which we are referring receives further light from another class of terms, in which we characterise it from within instead of from without, and speak of it as it is felt in itself, rather than as it looks in its effects. As a spectator of men on a theatre of character, I speak of their *Morals;* as an agent, uttering the corresponding consciousness secreted at my own centre, I speak of my *Duty*. The word, I need not say, expresses that there is something which is *due* from me, — which I *owe*, — which I *ought* to do. Nor perhaps is it insignificant, that the *tenses* of this verb have lost their distinction, and *one* alone, and that the past, is made to serve for all; as if to show that obligation escapes the conditions of time, and is less a phenomenon than an essential and eternal reality, which, however manifested at the moment, is not new to it. In any case, the word expresses the sense we have of a *debt* which others have *a right to demand* from us, and which we are *bound* to pay. And here we have another term, still more expressive of the inward feeling characteristic of a moral being: there is, it seems, something that *binds*, — in Latin, *obliges* us, — puts a restraint on the direction of our will, yet not an outward restraint upon its power, but an interior restraint from shame and reverence. The same meaning

may be found in all the language of law and ethics: within, a *binding*, — without, a *rule of usage*. I am aware that these subjective words denoting *obligation* might be explained away, by the same process of inversion already applied to the notion of customs. It might be said that men, having set up a usage, enforce it upon each separate agent, and tie him down to its observance; and that this external necessity put upon him is all that the word Duty originally expressed. The question involved in this evasion must be reserved for future treatment. At present I will only remark that it is a mere hypothetical artifice, to explain the individual's sense of inner obligation by the social imposition of an outer constraint; that, to our actual consciousness, the authority of duty *seems* to be independent of what the world may say of us or do to us; and that it is at least as plausible to maintain, that the law we impose on others is the externalisation of that which overawes ourselves, as *vice versa*. The truth is, I apprehend, that both factors, the felt inner binding on ourselves and the enacted outer restraint upon our fellows, are parallel and concurrent expressions of the same nature; neither is before or after the other; and so long as we dispute whether it is the individual constitution that makes the world, or the world that makes the individual constitution, the controversy will spin an endless round. The action and reaction are infinite; and the real question is, how is constituted, and with what inspiration is endowed, that *humanity* which has its unity and completeness, not in the lonely mind, but only in the *individuals of a kind*, raised by their whole system of relations into types of the nature which they represent?

I. Its Contents Developed

§ 1. *Objects of Moral Judgment*

With a view to determine the precise significance of this general fact let us notice, in the first place, what are the *objects* on which our moral judgment directs itself; and where, on the other hand, its sphere terminates. *What is it* that we judge?

(1) Self-evidently, it is *persons* exclusively, and not *things*, that we approve or condemn. The mere *given objects* of nature, or the

fabricated products of art, — the rock, the stream, the star; or the house, the ship, the lamp, — are perfectly indifferent to the conscience; and though they may become the centres of various feelings, we recognise the absurdity of applying to them epithets distinctly ethical. If ever we seem to invest them with such predicates, it is because for the moment we look beyond their simply physical aspect, and regard them as the expression of some Mind. If the rock is *stern*, if the stream is *joyous*, if the star is *mild*, it is because the inner heart of nature is felt to speak through them, and hold communion with us; and only in proportion as we lift the external world into this *personal* element, can such language appear justified. Once let utter negation be put upon this personal element, and the universe appear before us as without an inner meaning, as a mere play of fatalistic forces, and this phraseology loses all truth; and poetry, to whose very essence it belongs, becomes as much the indulgence of illusion as the child's dialogue with her dolls. That we give these words to things, and then first feel their true nature struck, only proves how ready we are to refer back all things to a personal Being behind them. It is the same, only yet more obviously, when we attach terms of moral judgment to the products of art. To *approve* a house, to *condemn* a ship, is to pronounce upon a fitness or unfitness for a given end; and whatever semblance of moral sentiment the words carry is directed on the skill and faithfulness of the human producer or possessor. Even *admiration*, though not a simply moral feeling, always requires the presence, secret or open, of some living mind on which to fasten; and though often addressing itself to the outer face of things, is really moved by the spirit which they seem to manifest. What else means the memorable parody of Comte on the Hebrew hymn, "The heavens declare the glory of God," — viz. that the only glory they declare is *that of Newton and Laplace? i. e.* the heavens themselves, as a physical splendour and infinitude, have nothing glorious to say to us: first when brought into contact with *some mind*, have they significance to move us; and if they represent to us *no prior and inner mind* whose eternal thoughts they hang aloft, they must wait for the genius of some *outward observer and interpreter* ere they can mean

anything sublime. This ingenuous confession of the great "High Priest of Humanity" agrees precisely with the principle laid down in the following striking passage of Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi: "*Intending Thought* it is that makes the difference between a true God and Fate. It is inseparable from Reason, and Reason from it. Nay, it is identical with Mind; and only to the expression of Mind do the feelings answer which are its witness in ourselves, — of admiration, reverence, love. We may indeed pronounce an object beautiful or perfect without first knowing how it came about, whether with foresight or not; but the power whereby it came about we cannot admire, if its product has been set up without thought and intending forecast, in virtue of mere laws of necessitating Nature. Even the glory and majesty of the heavens which bow down the childlike man in kneeling worship, no longer subdue the scientific soul aware of the mechanism that gives and maintains the motion of these bodies, and even moulded them as they are. Whatever wonder he feels is not at the object itself, infinite as it is, but only at the human intellect which, in a Copernicus, Gassendi, Kepler, Newton, Laplace, has been able to plant itself above the object, to kill out wonder by knowledge, to empty heaven of its gods, and disenchant the universe."

"But even this admiration, the only remnant spared to the scientific intelligence, would disappear, if some future Hartley, Darwin, Condillac, or Bonnet, were to exhibit to us, with any real success, a mechanism of the human mind as comprehensive, reasonable, and luminous as the Newtonian mechanism of the heavens. Art, science however high, virtue of any kind, we could no longer treat with genuine and thoughtful reverence, no longer look up to as sublime, or contemplate with adoring homage."

"We might still indeed, even then, be sensibly moved, nay, stirred with an emotion amounting to rapture, by the works and deeds of the heroes of mankind, — the life of a Socrates and Epaminondas, the science of a Plato and Leibnitz, the poetical and plastic representations of a Homer, Sophocles, and Phidias; just as even the most accomplished pupil of a Newton or Laplace might still possibly be touched and stirred with pleasurable emotion by the sensible aspect of the starry heaven. Only, no question

must then be asked about the *rationale* of such emotion; for Reflection could not fail to answer, 'You are but befooled like a child; when will you learn that Wonder is only and always a daughter of Ignorance?'" [1]

Of this general principle we need at present but one of the numerous applications. The approbation or disapprobation which we feel towards human actions is directed upon them as *personal phenomena;* and if this condition failed, would disappear, though they might still, as natural causes, be instrumental in producing much good or ill. Their moral character goes forward with them out of the person; and is not reflected back upon them from their effects. Benefit and mischief are in themselves wholly characterless; and we neither applaud the gold mine, nor blame the destructive storm.

(2) It follows, that what we judge is always the *inner spring* of an action, as distinguished from its outward operation. For, whatever else may be implied in its being a personal phenomenon, this at least is involved, that it is issued by the mind, and has its dynamic source there; and on that source it is, accordingly, that our verdict is pronounced. This is expressly admitted by Mr. Herbert Spencer, who says: "Every moment we pass instantly from men's perceived actions to the motives implied by them; and so are led to formulate these actions in mental terms rather than in bodily terms. *Thoughts and feelings* are referred to when we speak of any one's deeds with praise or blame; *not* those outer manifestations which reveal the thoughts and feelings. Hence we become oblivious of the truth that conduct, as actually experienced, consists of changes recognised by touch, sight, hearing." [2]

With not less emphasis does Mr. Leslie Stephen lay down the same rule. "The clear enunciation of one principle," he remarks, "seems to be a characteristic of all great moral revelations. The recognition amounts almost to a discovery, and would seem to mark the point at which the moral code first becomes distinctly separated from other codes. It may be briefly expressed in the phrase that *morality is internal.* The moral law, we may say, has

[1] Jacobi's *Werke*, vol. ii., Vorrede, pp. 51–55.
[2] *Data of Ethics*, chap. v., § 24, p. 64.

to be expressed in the form, "*Be* this," not in the form, "*Do* this." *The possibility of expressing any rule in this form may be regarded as deciding whether it can or cannot have a distinctly moral character.*" [1] Again he says: "A genuine moral law distinguishes classes of conduct, not according to external circumstances, but according to the motives involved; and, therefore, when the conformity to the law is only external, it is more proper to say that it is not conformity at all." [2] Yet another pregnant sentence, "Virtue implies a certain *organisation of the instincts*," [3] assumes, it is evident, the *Ethics of motive*, as distinguished from the *Ethics of action*.

From moralists of a far different school the same witness comes: the Hegelian moralist, Mr. F. H. Bradley, tells us: "Morality has not to do immediately with the outer results of the Will": "acts, so far as they spring from the good will, are good": "what issues from a good character must likewise be morally good." And,[4] with equal distinctness, Professor Green insists that "It is not by the outward form that we know what moral action is. We know it, so to speak, on the inner side. We know what it is in relation to us, the agents; what it is as our expression. Only thus indeed do we know it at all." And so "it remains that *self-reflection* is the only possible method of learning what is the inner man or mind that our action expresses; in other words, what that action really is." "Without it," he adds, "the customary expressions of moral consciousness in use among men," and "the institutions in which they have embodied their ideas or ideals of permanent good," would be unmeaning, and "have nothing to tell." [5]

That these testimonies, flowing in from various sides, meet upon a real truth is evident from a very simple analysis. The word "action" is a word of complex meaning, taking in the whole process from the first stir of origination in the agent's mind to the last pulsation of visible effect in the world. James Mill is fond of laying out its elements into three stages: (1) the sentiments

[1] L. Stephen's *Science of Ethics*, chap. iv., § 16, p. 155.
[2] *Ib.*, chap. vi., § 13, p. 277.
[3] *Ib.*, § 36, p. 302.
[4] F. H. Bradley's *Ethical Studies*, pp. 207, 208.
[5] *Prolegomena to Ethics*, Book II., chap. i., §§ 93, 94, 95, pp. 97, 98.

whence it springs; (2) the muscular movement in which it visibly consists; (3) the consequences in which it issues. Of these, cut off the first, and the other two lose all their moral quality; the muscular movement becomes a spasm or sleep-walking; the consequences become natural phenomena, pleasant like fine weather, or terrible like an incursion of wild beasts. But cut off the other two, and in reserving the first alone, you save the moral quality entire: though paralysis should bar the passage into outer realisation, and intercept the consequences at their birth, still the personal record contains a new act, if only the inner mandate has been issued. The moment which completes the mental antecedents touches the character with a clearer purity or a fresh stain; nor can any hindrance, by simply stopping execution, wipe out the light or shade: else would guilt return to innocence by being frustrated, and goodness go for nothing when it strives in vain. This principle carries its own evidence with it, and neither requires nor admits of further proof. Two remarks only will I make respecting it: (1) It is a characteristic of the Christian ethics, and finds its most solemn expression in the Sermon on the Mount, where the eye of lust and the heart of hate are called to account with the adulterer and the murderer; and reappears, though lifted into a region higher than the ethical, in the doctrine of justification by faith, which, by a simple inward affection of the soul, establishes reconciled relations between the broken performances of man and the infinite holiness of God. (2) It is directly opposed to the maxim, that the only value of good affections is for the production of good actions: — a maxim which is just a rebuke to idle and barren good affections as compared with the healthy and fruitful, but which becomes monstrously false when it demands not only inward creative energy, but outward opportunity and success, and treats with slight even an intense fidelity and love, because its field of life is small, and its harvest for the world is scanty. Instead of measuring the worth of goodness by the scale of its external benefits, our rule requires that we attach no *moral value* to these benefits, except as signs and exponents of the goodness whence they spring; and graduate our approval by the purity of the source, not by the magnitude of the result. Here,

therefore, we touch upon an essential distinction between the Christian and the Utilitarian ethics; and confidently claim for the former the verdict of our moral consciousness.

§ 2. *Mode of Moral Judgment*

Next, we may attend to the *mode* of moral judgment, and determine how the mind proceeds in estimating its own impulses and volitions. For, process of some kind there must be: every verdict implies preference; every preference, comparison; every comparison, things compared, and grounds of resemblance and difference between them. To define these is to explain our mode of judgment.

(1) The one great condition which raises the spontaneous into the self-conscious life is this: — the simultaneous presence and collision of the forces which check and exclude each other. Without the encounter of bodies, the dream of mere sensation would not wake into perception. Without the answering face of other men, the sense of personal existence would remain dim. And without the appearance in us of two incompatible impulses at once, or the interruption of one by the invasion of another, the moral self-consciousness would sleep. It is not *difference only* that suffices to produce the effect; for differences might coexist among objects side by side in the space before us, yet would they never disengage themselves into view, did they not break their stillness and move among themselves; and living impulses might successively occupy us, yet would they never become objects of our attention, did each one spend itself and fade ere the next appeared, so that we were picked up by them one by one, and caught disengaged in every case. From this state we are rescued by perpetual "breach of the peace" within our nature, and the clamour of impatient propensities disputing for simultaneous admission, or prematurely cutting short the career of the principle in possession. It is only when *difference amounts to strife*, that it completes the passage from spontaneity to self-consciousness. This perhaps is part of the meaning embraced in the celebrated proposition of Heracleitus, that "strife is the father of all things": though in his doctrine, that nothing could arise without the collision of oppo-

sites, the subjective world was less in view than the objective. Be that as it may, the maxim has a just application to the phenomena of our moral life. It is not till two incompatible impulses appear in our consciousness and contest the field, that we are made aware of their difference and are driven to judge between them. But the moment this condition is realised, we are sensible of a contrast between them other than that of mere intensity or of qualitative variety, — not analogous to the difference between loud and soft, or between red and sour; — but requiring quite a separate phraseology for its expression, such as this: that one is *higher, worthier*, than the other, and, in comparison with it, has the clear *right to us*. This apprehension is no mediate discovery of ours, of which we can give an account; but is immediately inherent in the very experience of the principles themselves, — a revelation inseparable from their appearance side by side. By simply entering the stage together and catching the inner eye, they disclose their respective worth and credentials. A child, for example, not above the seductions of the jam-closet, finding himself alone in that too trying place, makes hurried inroads upon the sweetmeats within tempting reach; but has scarcely sucked the traces from his fingers before he is ready to sink into the earth with compunction, well knowing that the appetite he has indulged is meaner than the integrity he has violated. A passionate boy will vent his impatience on any inanimate object that obstructs his purpose, splitting his unsuccessful peg-tops, or breaking his tangled fishing-line; and will accuse himself of no wrong. But let his paroxysm spend itself on a sister, and send her wounded and crying away; and the instant remorse brings home to him how much higher is the affection he has slighted than the resentment he has allowed. The thirsty traveller in the desert would seize, instinctively and without a thought, the draught from the spring he has found at last; but if he have a companion faint and dying of the fever, he knows that his appetite must give precedence to his compassion, and he holds the cup of cold water first to another's lips. In these cases, — and they appear to me fair representatives of all our moral experience, — the very same impulses which, when sole occupants, would carry us unreflectingly and

unreluctantly to their end, instantly appear in their true relative light when their field is disputed by a rival. Nothing more is needed, and nothing less will serve, than their juxtaposition and their incompatibility. There is no analysis or research required; it is a choice of Hercules, only without the reasoning and the rhetoric; the claims are decided by a glance at their face. We cannot follow both; and we cannot doubt the rights and place of either. Their *moral valuation* intuitively results from their *simultaneous appearance.*

Here, however, complaint may be reasonably made of the inexact, even half-mystical language, in which the relation between the conflicting springs of action has been described. They have been contrasted as "*higher and lower.*" These terms are *comparatives;* and with this peculiarity, that their *positives*, "high" and "low," do not, like "red" and "hard," introduce us to two heterogeneous predicates, but only to a "more" or "less" of the same, so as still to detain us among mere comparatives. "*High*" carries us towards one extremity, "*low*" towards the other, of some one extended and graduated whole. What then is that whole? How are we to name the underlying quantity or quality, on which these degrees are measured off? As they are not physical altitudes, they must stand upon something inherent in our springs of action, which, in its differences, affects us similarly to varieties of elevation. Till this "something" is specified, the propositions which assert "more" or "less" are propositions about Nothing.

I admit at once the justice of this demand, and the difficulty of meeting it at this stage, where nevertheless it naturally arises. To ask after the *quality* of an object is to ask about the way in which it affects us, *i. e.* about a feeling of our own from its presence or idea. The *springs of action* are here our object: the question therefore is, in virtue of what kind of feeling in us, excited by all of them, with intensity varied in each, do we apply to them the comparative language in the foregoing description? If I follow impulse A, instead of B, my volition will be "higher," — in what scale? — of pleasure? Not so, or I should enjoy the stolen sweetmeats without drawback, instead of being ashamed of them. Of

beauty? Not so, for I have no such feeling from my pug-nose, though I wish it were straight. I can only say, that, good as these things may be, it is another sort of good whose degrees affect me here; involving, what they do not, a sense of *Duty*, of *Right and Wrong, of Moral* worth, and a consciousness that I am *not at liberty*, though perfectly able, to go with the impulse B. The degrees therefore, I should say, are marked on the scale of *dutifulness*, of *rightness*, of *morality;* and in treating as ultimate and essential the attribute which these words designate, I support myself on the judgment of Professor Sidgwick,[1] who "regards it as a clear result of reflection that the notions of right and wrong, as peculiar to moral cognitions, are *unique and unanalysable*." Of the several words available for naming this quality, "*Moral worth*" seems the most eligible (1) as applicable to what presents *gradations* of value; and (2) as exempt from intrusive associations. "Duty," and "Right," are so habitually used of single problems and concrete cases, where there is *one good* course and *one bad*, that they represent prominently the *dual* antithesis of each separate moral experience, and do not easily lend themselves to the expression of relative intensities of excellence through the whole system of ethical combinations of motive. The word "Virtue" is very tempting, from its covering an indefinite number of gradations; but it has two disadvantages: (1) its gradations are only on the *upper side* of the neutral level, and, to mark the *minus values* of which we almost always have to speak at the same time, other language must be sought; and (2) an association of *extra merit*, constituting an approach *to the heroic*, clings to the word, and fits it chiefly for special cases where temptation is above the average.

Is it thought strange that a "unique unanalysable" quality, whether of an action (as Professor Sidgwick would say), or of a spring of action (as I should prefer), should fail to reveal itself so long as the object was isolated, and should first be discovered when brought up by a double object? Even in our physical life, such experiences are not unknown: *e. g.* of *heat* we should have no suspicion, if the temperature were always the same in our own

[1] *Mind*, No. XXVIII., pp. 580, 581.

organism and around it; the loss of its equilibrium discloses its existence. But, besides this, the *moral* quality arises, not barely from the interplay between the object and ourselves, but in the relation of *two objects to one another;* and can no more exist without them, than fraternity can belong to a solitary man, or a convex surface present itself without a concave. In truth, the quality which we get to know does not really belong to *each* object, but is inherent in the pair as a dual object; and not only could not be *cognised,* but would not *exist,* till they fell into combination.

(2) If this be a true account of our elementary self-judgments, it throws great light on the whole method of the moral sentiments. If the first pair of impulses that compete for our will disclose their relative worth by simply assuming that attitude, it is the same with all the rest. Each in turn might be experienced in isolation, without giving us a moral idea; but each in turn, entering with a rival, reveals its comparative place and claims, and falls into the line of appointed order. And when the cycle of original experience has completed itself, when all the natural springs of action have had their mutual play, and exhausted the series of moral permutations, there will be resources within us for forming an entire scale of principles, exhibiting the gradations of ethical rank. We have only to collect the scattered results of particular combinations, and dispose them on the ascending steps of authority, and the flying leaves of the oracle, thus sorted out, fall into the systematic code of Divine law. It must no doubt be long before the materials are ready for the integral work: indeed it may be fairly regarded rather as an approximation than as a scheme ever finished. For, in the constitution of the individual man, new natural springs of action continue to arise, or greatly to change their character, through more than one-third of the common term of life. And the maturing of society around the individual also modifies his spiritual demands; producing, with more refined and artificial wants, mixed forms of impulse, complicating the list with interpolations and extensions. Still, the beginning of a scheme of moral estimate may be made, by following the clue which we have indicated, and seeking with it the true hierarchy of human im-

pulses. But, if we once let slip this means of guidance; if we either delude ourselves into the belief that our nature is not a system of powers, but dominated by some single autocratic propensity, or treat its inner springs of action as a democracy in which there is no hierarchy at all; it will be impossible to give any explanation of the moral sentiments or any justification of their verdicts in detail. The whole ground of ethical procedure consists in this: that we are sensible of a *graduated scale of excellence* among our natural principles, quite distinct from the order of their intensity and irrespective of the range of their external effects.

CHAPTER IV. NATURE OF MORAL AUTHORITY

In speaking of the relation among the separate springs of action as they appear in the eye of Conscience, I have frequently adverted to the *Authority* which we acknowledge in the higher over the lower. It is important to approach a little nearer to this feeling, and find what it contains. Not indeed that it is in itself other than a simple feeling, admitting of little analysis or explanation. But on this very account, the attempt to unfold it and produce its equivalents occasionally results in very inadequate expressions for it, which, if carelessly accepted, may confuse or disguise for us its real nature. . . .

. . . . . .

"The notion of 'ought' or 'moral obligation,' as used in our common ethical judgments, does not" (says Professor Sidgwick), "merely import (1) that there exists in the mind of the person judging a specific emotion (whether complicated or not by sympathetic representation of similar emotions in other minds); nor (2) that certain rules of conduct are supported by penalties which will follow on their violation (whether such penalties result from the general liking or aversion felt for the conduct prescribed or forbidden, or from some other source). What then, it may be asked, does it import? What definition can we give of 'ought,' 'right,' and other terms expressing the same fundamental notion? To this it might be answered that the notion is too element-

ary to admit of any formal definition." "In our practical judgments and reasonings, it must, I conceive, be taken as ultimate and unanalysable." And though, "in the narrowest ethical sense I cannot conceive that I ought to do anything which at the same time I judge that I cannot do" (so that the obligation is individual), yet "normally" I imply that the judgment is objective: that is, that what I judge "right," or what "ought to be" must, unless I am in error, be thought to be so by all rational beings who judge truly of the matter.[1]

For my part, however, I would even venture a little further than this impersonal conception in dealing with the egoistic explanation of the belief in Duty; and would put this simple question: whether an insulated nature can be the *seat of authority at all*, and whether, by merely splitting the mental constitution into a plurality of principles or faculties, such a relation can be established between its superior and inferior parts? Suppose the case of one lone man in an atheistic world; could there really exist any "authority" of higher over lower within the enclosure of his detached personality? I cannot conceive it; and did he, under such conditions, feel such a thing, he would then, I should say, feel a delusion, and have his consciousness adjusted to the wrong universe. For surely, if the sense of authority means anything, it means the discernment of something *higher than we*, having claims on our *self*, — therefore no mere part of it; — hovering over and transcending our personality, though also mingling with our consciousness and manifested through its intimations. If I rightly interpret this sentiment, I cannot therefore stop within my own limits, but am irresistibly carried on to the recognition of another than I. Nor does that "other" remain without further witness: the predicate "higher than I" takes me yet a step beyond; for what am I? A *person:* "higher" than whom no "*thing*" assuredly — no mere *phenomenon* — can be; but only *another Person*, greater and higher and of deeper insight. In the absence of society or human companionship, we are thus still held in the presence of One having moral affinity with us, yet solemn rights over us: by retiring into ourselves, we find that we are trans-

[1] *Methods of Ethics*, Book I., chap. iii., § 3, pp. 33, 34.

ported out of ourselves, and placed beneath the light of a diviner countenance. If it be true that over a free and living person nothing short of a free and living person can have higher authority, then is it certain that a "subjective" conscience is impossible. The faculty is more than part and parcel of myself; it is the communion of God's life and guiding love entering and abiding with an apprehensive capacity in myself. Here we encounter an "objective" authority, without quitting our own centre of consciousness; an authority which at once sweeps into the widest generality without asking a question of our fellow-men; for an excellence and sanctity which *He* recognises and reports has its seat in eternal reality, and is not contingent on our accidental apprehension: it holds its quality wherever found, and the revelation of its authority to one mind is valid for all. Each of us is permitted to learn, in the penetralia of his own consciousness, that which at once bears him out of himself, and raises him to the station of the Father of Spirits; and thence he is enabled to look down over the realm of dependent minds, and apply to them the all-comprehending law which he has reached at the fountain-head. If this pathway is correctly traced, from the moral consciousness to religious apprehension, all possible excuse is taken away for treating the authority of Conscience as merely personal and subjective, or even as that of Reason, "impersonally conceived"; for that which is real in the universal Archetype of all Mind cannot be either an abstraction or an accidental phenomenon of human individuality.

In startling contradiction to the position here laid down stands the assertion of the late Professor Green that "It is the very essence of moral duty to be imposed by a man upon himself";[1] and, but for the habit of consulting the context of an author's dicta, it would utterly dishearten me to find so profound and noble a thinker pronouncing essential what I had declared impossible. The Hegelian aptitude, however, for unifying contradictions is not easily baffled; and, to my infinite relief, it here comes into play with such success as to melt opposite predications into identity of truth. A man's own "Self" is not to be understood here as

[1] *Prolegomena to Ethics*, Book IV., chap. ii., § 324, p. 354.

a detached finite individuality, that could be what it is in presence of its mere numerical repetitions: that he has a *Self* at all, and knows it, is possible simply because the universe has an Absolute Self, or "self-conditioning and self-distinguishing mind," [1] which communicates itself to the human being, — the infinite to the finite spirit, — and constitutes thereby the knowledge of moral law as the expression, under temporal conditions, of an eternal perfection. A man, therefore, is "a law unto himself," not by autonomy of the individual, but by "self-communication of the infinite spirit to the soul"; [2] and the law itself, "the idea of an absolute *should be*," [3] is authoritative with the conscience, because it is a deliverance of the eternal perfection to a mind that has to grow, and is imposed, therefore, by the infinite upon the finite. The relation in which this doctrine presents the intuitions of the human conscience, and the Divine perfection of which they are partial manifestations in life, is in essential accordance with that to which I have given more direct theological expression. The difference is only such as must always remain between a doctrine developed from the idea of *duty* and one founded on the idea of *good;* and I am not sure that even this is not reduced below its legitimate minimum by a free resort, in the *Prolegomena*, to the conception and language of *obligation*, more congenial to the author's personality than to his theory. [4]

The difficulty which many persons feel in accepting the foregoing conclusion arises, I observe, primarily from a scruple about the initial proposition: I will therefore restate it in a form which I have given to it elsewhere, [5] and endeavour to clear it of indistinctness and doubt. "An absolutely solitary individual, if invested with power of various action and disposition, might affect himself for better or worse by what he did, but would be subject to no obligation and incur no guilt. The harm he occasioned

[1] *Prolegomena to Ethics*, Book II., chap. i., § 85, p. 90.

[2] *Ib.*, Book IV., chap. ii., § 319, p. 349.

[3] *Ib.*, Book IV., chap. ii., § 324, p. 355.

[4] For an important critique by Professor Sidgwick on the doctrine of the foregoing paragraphs, see *Mind*, No. XXXIX., pp. 434, 435; and for the author's defence the next number of the same Review.

[5] *Relation between Ethics and Religion*, p. 5.

would be a blunder and not a sin; the good which he earned would prove his wisdom, not his virtue." "Surely," it is objected, "if this Robinson Crusoe in a desert world were to sink into the brute, instead of becoming more of a man, he would be doing wrong, as well as foolishly." Perhaps so, if he be a Robinson Crusoe; because he will bring into his solitude a consciousness of all the springs of action, with their significant differences, which belonged to his previous human and Divine relations. But this is not the case which I put. The hypothesis supposes the total absence from the universe of any personal nature, or even sentient nature, but his own: then I say, if his nature is in correspondence with reality beyond it, he will feel no duty; and *vice versa*, if he has any consciousness of duty, he suffers under illusion.

To take the simplest case first, let us assume that the happiness of his which he may enhance or impair varies only in quantity, and, though coming from numerous objects, is homogeneous and subject to a common measure. Then, when from two instincts or passions the offer comes of a protracted mild satisfaction or an intense immediate one, with a balance in favour of the former, the *folly* of taking the latter is obvious; but the *guilt* of doing so cannot be affirmed with any intelligible meaning. How is he *bound* to make the other choice? "*Obligation*" is a relative term, implying somewhere a corresponding *claim of right: i. e.* it takes two to establish an obligation. *To whom* then is the alleged obligation upon the agent to take the larger amount of pleasure? For here there are *not two*, except indeed the two springs of action; and these are not two agents, nor are they agent and patient, between whom *obligation* can subsist: they are but *two phenomena;* and a phenomenon cannot be subject of duty. You will say, perhaps, "It is *to himself* that the obligation lies to choose the more fruitful lot." By the hypothesis, however, he is the person that *bears* the obligation; and cannot also be the person whose presence *imposes it:* it is impossible to be at once the upper and the nether millstone. Personality is unitary; and in occupying one side of a given relation is unable to be also in the other. In order to constitute for him an obligation, as between the two impulses,

he must have *two selves*, one for each; but the very essence of the problem depends on their both appearing in one and the same self-consciousness, before one and the same Will; a *pair* of phenomena co-present in an identical subject. To speak, therefore, of the self as dual is only an inexact way of describing two conditions of a single personality, — its apperceptions of different feelings; and if you affirm a duty, you again throw us upon the absurdity of a duty-bound phenomenon. Shall we gain anything better, if, by a change of phrase, we say that, in experiencing the preferable impulse, the *true Self* is there; in experiencing the other, a *false Self;* and that the latter is bound to yield to the former? To determine what this really means, consider how we are to know the true Self from the false. There are two tests conceivable. (1) As the individual, divided (*ex hypothesi*) against himself, leaves you in doubt, you may go round and consult other samples of the same nature, and return with the discovery of *its* common essence or *selfhood*. This test, requiring a plurality of members of the same type, is inapplicable to our case of a lonely being. (2) You may consult the *long run* of the individual, and identify him with his more frequent rather than his less frequent state. Here, no doubt, you will find it accord with his nature in the long run to take the more rather than the less of offered pleasure; and so, *the true self* must be that which exercises this preference. Admitting that a sense may thus be found for this phraseology, I must yet observe that it does not help the required conclusion. For, a predominant preference of the greater pleasure over the less is a *Prudential* characteristic, not a *Moral;* and where he misses it, the agent has indeed to regret an error, but not to repent of a sin. The difference, therefore, between the so-called true and false self reaches no further than that between the sound and the mistaken economist of personal satisfactions.

Perhaps, however, the missing moral element may turn up, if we now take into account what is claimed as a *second dimension* of pleasures, viz. their *quality*, as well as their quantity. There may be no obligation to take the *larger lot;* and yet there may be an obligation to take the *higher kind*. Waiving for the moment

all objection to this second dimension, let us put this proposition to the test employed with the former one. There is *an obligation*, you say, to take the higher quality of pleasure, in preference to the greater quantity. *To whom* then is this due? Surely, only *to himself;* there is no one else to be wronged; he, and he alone, is the loser; and the article which he loses is *pleasure*. And are not his pleasures his own concern? If he takes the cheapest lot, regardless of their being shoddy instead of whole wool, what more can you charge upon him than imprudence or bad taste? By importing a distinction of finer or more vulgar into human satisfactions, you do not step into the region of morals, but only change the field of extra-moral good. If the Italian with his delicate appetite enjoys his simple maccaroni, while the Welshman cannot relish his dinner without his leeks, or the Bohemian his without his garlick, the first is of finer perception; but the coarser taste of the others violates no obligation, and, if open to challenge, is so not as a guilt, but only as a mistake, which an extended experience will detect. All that you can say to any one under such conditions is, "You do not make the best of the resources of your nature": and he may answer, "Perhaps not; but I am the only sufferer by the waste, and am therefore a squanderer only, not an offender; I wrong no one but myself; and am simply a poorer economist."

Thus, relative quality in that which is *purely mine and under my will* (as *pleasure* is) carries in it no *authority*, but remains still in the *optional field*. Only where the relative quality speaks to me also as *over my will*, and the higher term is above, not only the lower term as a phenomenon in myself, but *myself* in which both appear, does *authority* make itself felt; *i. e.* in the morally higher quality is implicitly involved the presence of communicated preference from a superior mind. If, therefore, you suppose the lonely man still to be affected by *a duty* in relation to his several impulses, it is because you assume them to carry in them still the implication contained in your own, as framed for the relations of a social and Divine world.

CHAPTERS V.–VI. SPRINGS OF ACTION CLASSIFIED

The foregoing sketch of the essential bases of our moral constitution prepares the way for an actual scale of principles implied in the judgments of conscience. If it be true that each separate verdict of right and wrong pronounces some one impulse to be of higher worth than a competitor, each must come in turn to have its relative value determined in comparison with the rest; and, by collecting this series of decisions into a system, we must find ourselves in possession of a table of moral obligation, graduated according to the inner excellence of our several tendencies. The extreme complexity of the combinations renders the task of drawing up such a table precarious and difficult. It is not more so, however, than the enterprise taken in hand by many writers on ethics, viz. the production of a code of external duties computed to meet the infinitely varied exigencies of human life: for assuredly the permutations of outward condition far exceed in number the changes that may be rung on the competitions of inward affections. If the problem, therefore, assumes a discouraging aspect, it is rather from its unusual form than from any unexampled intricacy in its matter; and, though well aware that the following draft can at best be merely tentative, I shall not shrink from proposing it, were it only as a test of the theory which it applies.

It is difficult to understand the attitude of the modern English writers on Ethics towards the psychological aspect of their subject. They by no means call in question the general principle that moral worth or defect is an affair of *character*, to be estimated by the inward affection or intention whence action flows; and we have already seen in what unqualified language this principle finds expression in the writings of Professor Sidgwick, Mr. Spencer, and Mr. Stephen. From this principle, viz. "that a man is moral because and in so far as his instincts are correlated according to a certain type," does it not follow that, in order to give any account of the moralities, you must be able to enumerate the "instincts"; not only to enumerate them, but to describe the "type"

of their right correlation, and to contrast it with the varieties of wrong correlation? Either this is possible, or Ethics are impossible. And this is wholly a task of introspective classification and comparative estimate. Yet no sooner have these writers admitted the necessity of this work, than they run away from it as unmanageable and superfluous, and institute a hunt after the differences of morality in the field of external effects of action, instead of among the internal correlations of motive. The apology which is set up for this suicidal procedure will be examined further on. At present, I will no further defend the attempt to keep true to the psychological principle, than by saying, that it has been more or less followed by the chiefs of both ancient and modern philosophy, and has fallen into neglect only in recent times, and mainly through the influence of writers who have approached the study of Morals from either the casuist's or the jurist's point of view. Wherever the object contemplated is to lay down a correct legislative code, overt acts alone come into definition, with merely subordinate reference to the invisible state of mind whence they proceed; and the disposition will always prevail to reduce as far as possible this obscure factor, and give the utmost objective distinctness to the law.

Plato, however, though writing of the State, and carrying his inventive imagination into all its external organisation, did not fail to go back into the recesses of the human mind for the springs of private and public life, and the separating lines of right and wrong. I need only recall his threefold distribution of the inward sources of action, ἐπιθυμία, θῦμός, and νοῦς, and the relative rank assigned to each, both in the celebrated myth of the chariot, and in the remarkable enlargement of their group in the "Republic" by the appearance of the controlling δικαιοσύνη. To an arrangement almost identical Aristotle prefixed the general term τὸ ὀρεκτικόν (impulse), and appended a more detailed analysis running down to particular forms of each quality. There was no one of these impulses that might not have its best state, with faulty deviation on either side, towards excess and towards defect; and the *best state of it* was its ἀρετή, *e. g.* σωφροσύνη for ἐπιθυμία; ἀνδρεία for θυμός. This best state did not belong to the impulses by nature, but

must be determined or ratified by Reason (νοῦς); so that even the most happily constituted child, with no tendencies but towards some variety of good, could not on that account be called virtuous, but, in order to become so, must replace the mere drift of nature by the assenting determination of the self-conscious will. In the production of moral character, Aristotle thus recognises two factors, *instinctive impulse* and *rational election*. Of these, the first supplies the power; the second, the regulation. The former, by itself, would leave us unmoral animals; the latter, by itself, would make us unmoral intelligences: and, as between these two, — random activity and bare thought, — it is reasonable to regard the former as the primary starting-point or matter for Ethics, and the latter as the organiser of their form. In these Greek modes of laying out our subject, two points deserve especial notice: (1) That they look for their whole moral world *within*, among the phenomena of the conscious and self-conscious nature; not among the conditions of external action. And (2) that the rational reflection, which, in their view, first converts *instinct into character*, they regard as exercised upon each impulse *taken by itself*, so as to find out and mark its absolutely right degree; not upon the relative worth of two or more impulses pressing their demand together. In the first point they seem to me to have seized, in the second to have missed, a prime condition of true ethical theory.

The founders of the modern philosophy, no less than the ancient schools, sought the whole material of their moral doctrine in the interior of the human mind; and not till they had set in order the motive forces which lie behind all external action, did they step into the field of applied morals and adjust that inward order to the objective conditions and varying limits of possibility which enter into the problems of actual life. Descartes, though giving us no systematised theory of Ethics, has gathered and arranged its preliminaries in his treatise on *Les Passions de l'Ame*, in the relative ascendency and right gradation of which he evidently conceives human perfection to consist. Malebranche, in his "Traité de Morale," not only passes under review "the inclinations" and "the affections," as his proper subject-matter, but insists on their *proportionate perfection*, and even makes "Love

for their law of order" the equivalent of all virtue. Spinoza, in carrying out his conception of the *Ethica*, worked upon the same line, pretty closely following Descartes in his enumeration and grouping of "*the affections*," and explicitly finding in their due subordination the secret of perfect character. The essential correctness of the leading idea of these philosophies is not affected by any imperfection that may be found in their classification of the springs of action. When, *e. g.*, both Descartes and Spinoza give, as their list of primary affections — (1) Wonder, (2) Love, (3) Hate, (4) Desire, (5) Mental Pleasure (*Lætitia*), (6) Mental Pain (*Mœror* or *Tristitia*), it is evident that they are mixing together with the genuine concrete type of impulse, — *e. g.* Wonder, — which is the kind of datum we require, mere general qualities gathered by abstraction, — *e. g.* Love and Hate, — from a number of concrete impulses. To have an impulse *towards* anything is to love it; *from* anything is to hate it; neither of the words introduces us to any fresh impulse which may be added to the list, but only to a feature invariably predicable of half the set; and since these common qualities are irrespective of the ethical values and run across them (the love of turtle and the love of truth both coming under the head of *Amor*), they have no proper place in the moral psychology. We do not want an analysis of the idea of "natural instinct," so as to exhibit its contents; but a list of such instincts, as they are and work; and, in constructing this, we cannot afford to overlook their different types of activity; whether they are mere outbursts of inward feeling, or are directed upon objects, the varieties of which may have much to say about their value. A reference to the catalogue of the "affections," which I have formerly given from Descartes and Spinoza, will make it clear that it is a medley of real instincts, with abstractions picked out from them, and with virtues and vices sprung from their operation in their several fields, or from their combinations with each other. But for this initial error, it might have become the basis of a Moral doctrine parallel in its development with the growth of physical science.

If we seek help, in our attempt to classify the springs of action, from the eighteenth-century philosophy instead of the seven-

teenth, — in particular from the school of Hobbes, which hardly assumed importance till the last century, rather than that of Descartes, — our hopes are disappointed from an opposite tendency, to fallacious simplification; carried to its extreme in the reduction of all impelling forces to *self-love*. This short and easy formula, applied in naked shamelessness by such writers as Helvetius, could not but provoke resistance by its paradoxical interpretation of human life. In the hands of Hartley and Condillac, however, it was started upon a course of evolution, which enabled it to yield any number of disinterested affections as the blossom and fruit of primal self-gratification; and in this form it held its ground with those who insisted upon the recognition of unselfish motives, though upon terms which construed them into illusions. But men will not go on forever believing that they are tricked by their nature into groundless goodness, or be content to love whatever is dearer than themselves on false pretences; and so they now prefer to cut the alleged dependence of the generous affections upon personal self-seeking, and give them their own separate root. This is certainly a gain, taking us back a step nearer to nature. Yet, as it is but the reactionary split of a false unity, it leaves us with only a duality, — viz. "egoism" and "altruism," — as comprising the total springs of human character. The simplification, though not carried so far as before, is still altogether artificial, counting, not by natural distinctions, but by arbitrarily abstracted resemblance. Many instincts do not become one, merely because, when satisfied, they all please *the same ego;* nor are several heterogeneous affections identified by being directed without exception on *something other* than one's self; yet nothing more than this spurious unification is expressed by the words "egoism" and "altruism." The antithesis which they mark exercises, it seems to me, a tyrannical influence on the minds of our recent writers; turning all moral doctrine into either a duel or a negociation between two opposite tendencies of thought, and forcing the variegated phenomena of character to fling off their native movement and costume, and appear on parade in the regimental uniform of this or that philosophic flag.

Perhaps the writers of the Scottish school have best avoided

the misleading conceptions on which I have commented. Dr. Reid's distribution, indeed, of active impulses into (1) mechanical, (2) animal, (3) rational, cannot well be rescued from Dugald Stewart's criticism.[1] But Stewart's own classification is based, I think, upon strictly natural distinctions, though needing to be more explicitly wrought out. Under the five heads (1) appetites, (2) desires, (3) affections, (4) self-love, (5) moral faculty, he finds room for all the motive and directing forces of our nature. We have here the rudiments of a philosophical arrangement, because he recognises on the one hand the difference between animal impulse and open-eyed desire; and on the other, between the *dynamical* principles enumerated under the first three heads, and the *regulative* action of the two last, — Self-love and Conscience. These distinctions, however, though verbally mentioned, remain practically unused: they are not permitted to have any effect on the classification, which presents the series of five springs of action, consecutively enumerated, as if they were all in the same rank in the predicamental line, and there were no reason for disposing them in principal and dependent groups. The differential marks prevailing among them are quite too important, psychologically and morally, to be so slightly treated; and the following distribution, with other deviations, differs from Stewart's chiefly in the attempt to give these discriminating characters their just rights.

Primary and Secondary

Guided by the fact that man is conscious before he is self-conscious, and has active tendencies in both stages, I would begin by distinguishing between two sets of impelling principles: viz. those which urge him, in the way of unreflecting instinct, to appropriate objects or natural expression; and those, on the other hand, which supervene upon self-knowledge and experience, and in which the preconception is present of an end gratifying to some recognised feeling. The former we may call the Primary springs of action; the latter, the Secondary. These names are the more appropriate, because serving to mark, not only an order

[1] Stewart's *Works*, Hamilton's edition, vol. vi., p. 125.

of enumeration, but an order of derivation: the secondary feelings being not something entirely new, but the primary over again, metamorphosed by the operation of self-consciousness; and demanding a category to themselves, because their original features and their moral position are greatly changed by the process.

§ 13. *Table of Springs of Action*

It may be useful to collect the results of our survey of the springs of action into a tabular form. The following list presents the series in the ascending order or worth: the chief composite springs being inserted in their approximate place, subject to the variations of which their composition renders them susceptible.

LOWEST

1. Secondary Passions; — Censoriousness, Vindictiveness, Suspiciousness.
2. Secondary Organic Propensions; — Love of Ease and Sensual Pleasure.
3. Primary Organic Propensions; — Appetites.
4. Primary Animal Propension; — Spontaneous Activity (unselective).
5. Love of Gain (reflective derivative from Appetite).
6. Secondary Affections (sentimental indulgence of sympathetic feelings).
7. Primary Passions; — Antipathy, Fear, Resentment.
8. Causal Energy; — Love of Power, or Ambition; Love of Liberty.
9. Secondary Sentiments; — Love of Culture.
10. Primary Sentiments of Wonder and Admiration.
11. Primary Affections, Parental and Social; — with (approximately) Generosity and Gratitude.
12. Primary Affection of Compassion.
13. Primary Sentiment of Reverence.

HIGHEST

§ 14. *How far a Life must be chosen among these*

This scale of relations aims at exhibiting the duty of the moral agent in each crisis of competitive impulse, as it is given him; but it does not profess to measure the comparative value of the several springs of action in human life as a whole. To determine *this*, another factor, besides that of *Quality*, must be taken into account, viz. that of *frequency*. It is quite possible that the superior springs may have rarer opportunities of putting in their claims upon the will and directing their inferiors to retire; and then the nobler scenes which they mingle with the drama will be but brief heroic episodes in a piece of many level acts. And though even humble and unenvied lives are never without occasions for the play of conscience in its higher strain, yet the temptations recurring day by day bring on the battle further down; for example, against *the love of ease and pleasure* the resistance is more often set up by the *love of gain*, than by the intellectual impulses of *wonder and admiration;* and *resentment* is more commonly subdued, or at least smothered, by the fear of censure (*i. e.* the love of praise) than melted away by generous affection. It will not surprise us, therefore, if, in many a life that works an upward way, the part of πρωταγωνιστής is taken by some of the middle terms; and if, in the history of civilisation, they seem to fill the page through volumes, while for their superiors a chapter suffices here and there.

But though this may be a true account of the facts as they are, is it compatible with the foregoing doctrine of the moral consciousness to leave them so? Ought we to content ourselves with treating the springs of action as *our data*, with which we have nothing to do but to wait till they are flung upon us by circumstances, and then to follow the best that turns up? However needful it might be for us, as mere children of nature, thus to make what we could of them, as gifts of surprise, have we not, now that we are aware of their relative ranks, an earlier voice in their disposal, determining whether, and in what amount, this or that among them should come at all? Is all our care to be for the comparative *quality* of our incentives, and none for their *quantity*,

i. e. the *proportion of our life and action which they control?* If compassion is always of higher obligation than the *love of gain* or *family affection*, how can a man ever be justified in quitting his charities for his business or his home? Ought he not, conformably with the rule, to live at the top of the climax and never descend? Or at any rate, is there not *some* measure wanted, in order to determine how far the lower impulses are admissible without unfaithfulness? These are fair questions; and to meet them we must slightly qualify the hypothesis on which we have proceeded, viz. that we are to accept our rival incentives at the hands of circumstance and consider that our duty begins with their arrival. It is from this point that the portion of our moral experience commences which I wished to illustrate; but if there be at the command of our will, not only the selection of the better side of an alternative, but also a predetermination of what kind the alternative shall be, the range of our duty will undoubtedly be extended to the creation of a higher plane of circumstance, in addition to the higher preference within it. No parent is justified in placing his child, no youth in placing himself, in a position or occasion which is sure to abound in low temptations and to blunt and enfeeble the springs of action that would rally the will against them. And so far is this anxiety to mould the external conditions to the moral wants of life sometimes carried, that a profession reached through a costly training is abandoned, because it is not pure enough and disappoints the best affections; and some work is chosen which, it is supposed, will exercise only the supreme forms of love and reverence.

The limits, however, within which the higher moral altitudes can be secured by voluntary command of favouring circumstances are extremely narrow. Go where we may, we carry the most considerable portion of our environment with us in our own constitution; from whose propensions, passions, affections, it is a vain attempt to fly. The attempt to wither them up and suppress them by contradiction has ever been disastrous; they can be counteracted and disarmed and taught obedience only by preoccupation of mind and heart in other directions. Nothing but the enthusiasm of a new affection can silence the clamours of one already

there. And though, by selection of employment, I may certainly keep myself out of contact with this or that type of temptation (for example, from love of gain by joining the Brotherhood of Communists), and immure myself forever in the service of some one or two affections (for example, of compassion and devotion by taking the vows of an Order of Charity), yet experience shows that the total effect will be disappointing, and that the character will not reach the elevation to which I aspire. The sterility of one part of the nature is no security for the fruitfulness of the rest; and so intimate are its reciprocal relations, that it is impossible to live upon any one order of feelings: no sooner am I left alone with them to do only what they bid, than they begin to desert the very occupation they have prescribed, and turn it into a routine, or at best a skill and tact without inspiration. The true discipline of character lies in the various clashing of the involuntary and the voluntary, and the management of the surprises which it brings; and it is morally a fatal thing to be scared by the former element, and try to make it all into *self-discipline:* if we insist on commanding both the data and the quæsita of our problem, we turn the problem into a sham and introduce a dry rot into life. *Necessity is the best school of Free-will.* But it must be a *real,* and not a *self-imposed* necessity, or we shall be victims of a delusion and a snare.

It suffices, then, for us to admit to our questioner, that a man ought not to become so absorbed in his business or his studies as to leave no scope for the free movement of his higher affections and no time for the duties they enjoin. But this very obligation I would rather rest on the objective claims of the relations, human and Divine, which he is in danger of guiltily setting aside, than on the subjective need, in his self-formation, of being less a stranger to the upper storeys of his spiritual experience. Let him accept his lot, and work its resources with willing conscience: and he will emerge with no half-formed and crippled character.

§ 15. *Resulting Rule*

We are now prepared for an exact definition of Right and Wrong; which will assume this form: *Every action is* RIGHT,

which, in presence of a lower principle, follows a higher: every action is WRONG, *which, in presence of a higher principle, follows a lower.* Thus, the act attributed to Regulus, in returning back to death at Carthage, was right, because the reverence for veracity whence it sprung is a higher principle than any fear or personal affection which might have suggested a different course, and of which we tacitly conceive as competing with the former. And the act of St. Peter in denying Christ was wrong, because the fear to which he yielded was lower than the personal affection and reverence for truth which he disobeyed. The act of the missionaries of mercy — whether a Florence Nightingale to the stricken bodies, or of a Columban, a Boniface, a Livingstone, to the imperilled souls of men — is right, because the compassion which inspires it is nobler than any love of ease or of self-culture which would resist it. The act of the manufacturer of adulterated or falsely-labelled goods is wrong, because done in compliance with an inferior incentive, the love of gain, against the protest of superiors, good faith, and reverence for truth. This definition appears to me to have the advantage of simply stating what passes in all men's minds when they use the words whose meaning it seeks to unfold. I will not say that, in his judgment on such cases, *no one* ever thought of his everlasting happiness: or, with Bentham, consulted the arithmetic of pleasures and pains and struck their balance; or, with Butler, took the question for solution to the autocratic oracle of conscience for an absolute "Yea" or "Nay." But, for the most part, these accounts of our reasons seem to me artificially invented, and in very imperfect correspondence with the real history of our minds: particularly the first and third as ignoring the sense of *proportionate worth* among right things, and *proportionate heinousness* in wrong. No constant aim, no one royal faculty, no contemplated preponderance of happy effects, can really be found in all good action. More scope for variety is felt to be needed: and this is gained as soon as we quit the casuist's attempt to draw an *absolute dividing line* between good and bad, and recognise the relative and preferential conditions of every moral problem.

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